



# SCOTLAND COUNTY MONTHLY

NOVEMBER 2004

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

## Death benefits now worth more

*Reprinted from Retirement Monitor, August 23, 2004*

The General Assembly in 2004 boosted two death benefit programs available to North Carolina's local government workers and retirees: the Contributory Death Benefit and the death benefit provided through the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System.

The Contributory Death Benefit is a voluntary program offered to employees when they retire. After the retiree pays the required contributions for 24 months, the program provides a payment upon death of the retiree to the retiree's spouse, or to their estate.

The General Assembly increased the amount provided at death from \$6,000 to \$9,000. Retirees will see no increase in the cost of the benefit as a result of this change.

In addition to the Contributory Death Benefit, local government employees are eligible for a death benefit, which is paid to their families if they die in active service.

The General Assembly in 2004 boosted this benefit significantly  
**see Benefits, page 4**

## Local voter turnout a record

Scotland County kept pace with the rest of the country in record voter turnout this past election. More than 50 percent of registered voters cast ballots.

A total 7,544 voters stopped by the 10 Scotland County precincts November 2. Add to that the 3,765 who voted early by paper ballot or in person. There are 20,655 registered voters in Scotland County.

"I've been here since 1988, and the voter turnout certainly was a record," said Board of Elections Director Judy Riggins. "We had more young people voting this time than in the past, and that's good."

A slow first week for Early Vote with 1,620 residents making it to the polls, compared to more than 2,000 four years earlier, more than doubled as the second week of Early Vote drew to a close.

Lines got longer in the final days of Early Vote and eventually voters were redirected from outside, when it began to rain, to a line that coiled around the interior core of the County Annex.

One voter who showed up early on the final Saturday, October 30, waited in line two hours in order to cast his ballot.

Riggins said of future elections, "I only hope it will grow in numbers of people who turnout to vote."



*Debra Holcomb gets acquainted with her new surroundings.*

## Register of Deeds-elect prepares for new challenge

The opportunity to shadow Register of Deeds Jane Callahan was a welcome experience for Debra Holcomb.

It allowed the Register of Deeds-elect to absorb some of Callahan's more than 28 years' experience, an opportunity for which she is grateful.

"Jane has been very gracious, precise and methodical about teaching me," said Holcomb, who began shadowing Callahan October 25.

Holcomb added, "She's (Callahan) been wonderful. A lot of people might not open their office up like that, and I can't thank her enough."

Holcomb officially becomes Register of Deeds December 6 when she takes the oath of office administered by Whit Gibson, Clerk of Court and her former supervisor.

Holcomb's new office isn't far from where she used to work in the Courthouse. Since 1995 she served in the Clerk of Superior Court office, most recently as Deputy Clerk.

Because she shadowed Callahan for a month, Holcomb said she no longer will feel overwhelmed. "I'll be okay if I can maintain what Jane has been doing all these years."

A Scotland County resident since 1984, Holcomb lived in nearby Rowland and attended high school there.

Her move to Scotland County was like coming home. "My roots are here," Holcomb said. Researching both sides of the family, she discovered local ancestors who served in the Revolutionary War as well as those who served as Confederate soldiers.

She said of her election, "I am honored, and my family is honored, that people from Scotland County would put me in this position."



**Voters wait to cast their ballots.**

## High School site for mass vaccination clinic

The viability of a conducting a mass vaccination in Scotland County was put to the test by an estimated 50 community volunteers along with public health, mental health, EMS, law enforcement and transportation staff.

The November 6 clinic at Scotland High School focused on fine tuning local efforts for a mass vaccination in the event of a smallpox outbreak in Scotland County.

The clinic, based on a mass vaccination plan developed in 2002, concluded after several months devoted to careful, methodical planning and a tabletop exercise focused on logistics, operations and finance.

Preparation for the clinic involved communitywide input from the City, County, Red Cross, public schools, hospital, mental health, law enforcement, volunteer fire departments and first responders.



**Debbie Maske, RN, Communicable Disease Nurse, left, and Angela Moore, RN, BSN, Communicable Disease Coordinator, go through the exercise of administering a smallpox vaccination to a young volunteer.**

Health Director Jane Murray said, "The exercise was successful in that it gave us an opportunity to evaluate the plan developed over two years ago and to use the actual clinic site identified for mass vaccination."

Staff evaluation and discussion followed the mass vaccination clinic. Murray said, "The main concern was the ability to vaccinate almost 7,000 citizens a day with the mandated education component and paperwork necessary."

Murray added, "We believe the exercise was a wonderful learning opportunity and will be a benefit as we continue to update and fine tune our plan."

EMS Director Roylin Hammond agreed the clinic was a success. "Staff was able to use the facility where a true event might take place. They were able to gain an understanding of the facility's layout, its advantages and its disadvantages. They were able to get a true picture of the time required to have a patient complete the paperwork, the educational process, and the actual time required to process through the clinic."

He added, "The exercise really brought home the enormous time, cost and manpower requirement such a clinic would demand. These and other lessons learned will help make planning revisions and positive adjustments in the operation of a local mass vaccination clinic."

Both Murray and Hammond agreed that the County benefited from the exercise in that it would be better prepared if the need for a mass vaccination clinic occurred.

## the Birthday list for December

**2** Peggy Robinson (Health) and Kimberly Cheek (DSS); **4** Lloyd Goins (Jail); **5** David Newton (Sheriff), Prentis Henegan (Parks and Recreation) and Wendy Stanton (DSS); **6** Tracie Jacobs and Amy Ratley (EMS); **8** Heather Johnson (DSS); **10** Patrick Davis (EMS); **11** Dennis Chavis (Public Works); **14** Patricia Wells (DSS); **15** Sue McRae (Elections) and Morrison Lockey (EMS); **17** Sylvia Kolb (Jail) and Kathie Cox (Health); **18** Nicki Peek (Health); **20** Dr. William Stroud (Health Board), Gail Wright (Administration) and Cynthia Jones (Transportation); **21** Teresa Gorden (DSS); **23** Barbara Britt (Jail) and Barbara McLean (DSS); **24** Sandra Leonard (DSS), Charles "Scoofer" Jordan (Commissioner), Anne Tindall (Administration) and Esther Taylor (Health); **26** John Alford (Sheriff/Commissioner); **27** Martin Davis (Public Buildings) and Elfreda Locklear (DSS); **29** Cynthia Gibson (Health) and Cynthia Moore (DSS); **30** James Patterson (Transportation), Betty McMullen (Jail) and Bunny Anderson (Soil and Water Conservation); **31** Mary Ivey (Tax), Marcia Coble and Angie Lassiter (DSS), Mary Armstrong (Health) and Debbie McRae (Transportation).

## EMStatistics

### EMS Report for October:

**Responded to 402 Medical/Trauma calls**

**Treated 48 motor vehicle accident patients**

**Provided 9 medical coverages**

**Administered 100 blood pressure checks**

**Gave 4 department presentations**

### 911 Report Highlights:

**Received 1,396 total calls**

**354 EMS**

**268 Sheriff's Department**

**102 Laurinburg Police Department**

**14 Fire Department**

**310 hang-up calls**

**112 wrong numbers**

**65 open line calls**

**649 cellular calls**

### Weather Observations

#### (EMS Recordings)

**Temp (high) 86 on 10/31**

**Temp (low) 43 on 10/16**

**Wind (mph) 26 on 10/16**

**Rainfall (inches) .15 on 10/13**

**Compiled by Tommy Hatcher**



## Morrison to serve, Gibson honored

**Agricultural Extension Agent David Morrison, left, will serve a four-year term on the Scotland Soil and Water Conservation District Board effective December 2004. T.G. Gibson III, right, was honored for 10 years of service to the Scotland Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) Board. Gibson, Chairman of the Scotland SWCD Board, was recognized at the Area VII North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's fall meeting. Additionally, Bunny Anderson, Scotland Soil and Water Conservation District, received a plaque for 2004 accomplishments in District Programs.**

# Post Scripts

**Al Blades** and **Raymond Moody** attended the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Association annual meeting in Hickory in November. ☘ Scotland Place Senior Center will have a **Snowman gourd craft class** December 13 at 1 p.m. Fee is \$5. The class is open to Scotland County residents age 55 and older. ☘ **Foster Children's Association** received its tax-exempt ruling from IRS. FCA is now a 501(c)3, which means all donations are now "tax-deductible." ☘ In Health Department news: Congratulations to **Lucy Walters** on her promotion to a Nutritionist II position within the WIC program. The Health Department will now recruit a Nutritionist I position. Best of luck to **Missy Collins** RN in her new position with the Scotland County School System. Congratulations to **Melinda Salley**, Social Work Coordinator, for being selected October Employee of the Month. A special thank you to all **County employees** who participated in the Smallpox Bioterrorism Exercise November 4 to 6. The health promotion program awarded \$500



## Shelley thanked

Commissioner Nancy Shelley was honored by the Fire Commission for helping it secure 11 of 14 fire trucks since 1997.

"We were really concerned we would ever get that many fire trucks in that short a period of time, but we did," said Laurel Hill Fire Chief Clyde Locklear.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond presented Ms. Shelley with a framed photograph of the 14 fire trucks taken at Pate Stadium.

Ms. Shelley said of her decision to run for Commissioner 12 years ago, "I just love this County, always have, always will."

She thanked the community for its support as well as Scotland County employees. "You have a special place in my heart, every one of you, because you have given so much so unselfishly."

## English certified

Scotland County 4-H Agent Sharon English earned National ServSafe® Certification. English received certification for "successfully completing the standard set forth by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation for the ServSafe® Food Protection Manager Certification Examination."



Certification means English may serve as a certified instructor in ServSafe® food service programs.

ServSafe® helps teach food service providers a variety of safe food handling practices. For more information about ServSafe® and what new opportunities this certification brings to Scotland County, contact English at 277-2422.

## DSS focuses on leadership



**DSS Leadership group 'throw' troubles away.**

The DSS Leadership Team graduated with honors from Fun Academy November 17. Facilitated by Cooperative Extension Director Cathy Graham, Fun Academy focused on leadership, team building, planning and how to work together in the agency. "The morning really helped us focus on what needed to be accomplished," said DSS Director Jan Elliott. "It was a great way to reenergize the group. We've invited Cathy to do something like this for the whole agency in the future."

program awarded \$500 mini-grants to five area churches — **Franklin Chapel AME Zion, Galilee United Methodist Church, Jones Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Sandhills Community Church** and **Union Grove Missionary Baptist Church**. The grants allow the churches to implement environmental and policy changes in their congregations related to healthy eating and physical activity. **Kathie Cox**, Health Promotion Coordinator, will work with the churches on program and activity development.

## 2005 Holiday Schedule



|                                  |                        |                   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| New Year's Day                   | December 31, 2004      | Friday            |
| Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday | January 17, 2005       | Monday            |
| Good Friday                      | March 25, 2005         | Friday            |
| Memorial Day                     | May 30, 2005           | Monday            |
| Independence Day                 | July 4, 2005           | Monday            |
| Labor Day                        | September 5, 2005      | Monday            |
| Veteran's Day                    | November 11, 2005      | Friday            |
| Thanksgiving                     | November 24 & 25, 2005 | Thursday & Friday |
| Christmas                        | December 23 & 26, 2005 | Friday & Monday   |

## John Blue House past on display

The house is now a home.

Once office space for Parks and Recreation staff, the John Blue House has been transformed into what a home would look like around the turn of the century.

The Historic Properties Commission assumed responsibility for the John Blue House August 26 when Parks and Recreation staff moved to Scotland Place.

The Commission along with a dozen volunteers redesigned the interior of the home with period furniture and accessories.

Volunteer Sara Stewart said some of the period items now on display were found in the cabins on the grounds of the historic property.

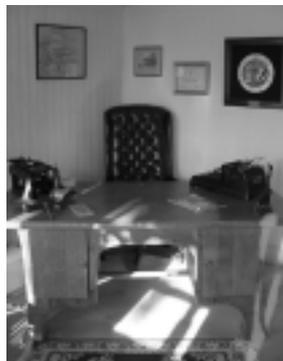
Visitors are invited to tour the home Wednesday through Saturday from 1 to 4 p.m. Spring and summer hours are extended to include 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Stewart recalls one Saturday not too long ago when 19 people stopped in for a tour.

"Visitation is sporadic," Stewart said. "Most of the people who come here tell us they saw the brown historic markers and came looking for the house."

In the months that followed the redecoration, volunteers developed a personal connection to the home.

"We've gotten to know the people who lived here, and the Blues are our best friends now," said Stewart.



*From the top, clothing, quilts and accessories on display, one of three period bedrooms, a rendering of how the John Blue study might have looked.*

## Positive results shared in annual Report to the People

Personal testimonials praising the success of local Cooperative Extension programs highlighted this year's Report to the People.

Some 60 elected officials and community leaders attended the combination dinner/annual update event.

Cooperative Extension staff provided more data along with accomplishments now that North Carolina State University is placing increased emphasis on quantifiable results.

For instance, 554 individuals were served by educational programs in 2003. Total number of clients served that year was 12,355. 4-H boomed with a 3,692 enrollment.

In every area from agriculture to livestock to 4-H to nutrition, people were on hand to share their personal experiences and successes as clients of the local Cooperative Extension office.



**Teacher Jack Davern, right, discusses the success of EFNEP at Covington Street School.**

### Introductions & transitions

The following individuals joined Scotland County Departments since September 16: **Kimberly Locklear** joins the Health Department fulltime; **Grady Lowery** joins the Jail fulltime; **Cynthia Moore, Lacarroll Rhone** and **Waldo Pearson** have joined DSS fulltime. **Willie Hunt** joins Public Works fulltime while **Clarence McMillan** is parttime in Public Works.

## Death benefits worth more

*continued from page 1*

by adjusting the maximum allowed payment from \$20,000 to \$50,000. Local government employers must elect to offer this benefit. An employee must work for at least one year to receive it.

Here's how this death benefit works now: If an employee dies in service (after one-year of service, while being paid salary by a local government entity) his or her beneficiaries receive a single lump sum payment. The payment equals the highest 12 months' salary in a row during the 24 months before death, but no less than \$25,000 and no more than \$50,000.

This benefit is also paid if they die within 180 days of the last day for which they were paid salary. Prior to the 2004 session, the maximum payment allowed was \$20,000.

## AEDs received



*Sheriff Buddy Blalock, left, reviews the features on one of four automated external defibrillators (AED) received by the Sheriff's Department. Four patrol vehicles will carry the AEDs making them available to the public on a 24-hour basis. 12 deputies will receive AED training. EMS Director, Roylin Hammond, right, also delivered four AEDs to the Laurinburg City Police Department. The AEDs were made available through a Duke Endowment grant.*

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.