

Scotland County

Monthly



NOVEMBER 2006

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Transportation staff holds open house

A new space for the Transportation staff is expected to enhance efficiency and customer service.

Transportation staff once shared a desk and a computer in the EMS building before the move to a separate modular structure next door.

Built with State monies and about \$7,000 from the County, which represents a 10 percent match, the building features a reception area, office, conference room, small kitchen and ADA compliant restroom.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond said, "Transportation staff now have their own space to work in, and drivers will have a break room and a place where they can eat lunch."

"This move is all about providing better service to the



customer," Hammond explained.

A sign in front of the Transportation building, pictured above, makes it easy to locate. At left, Transportation Coordinator Gracie Rettig sits at her own desk.

An open house was held earlier this month so the public could tour the new space.

The story behind the landfill

by John Crumpton, County Manager

Now that the election is over, it is important to clarify and communicate the background in siting a landfill in Scotland County and what the future may hold on this subject.

First the history. Waste Management approached the County in April 2005 with a proposal for a regional landfill. WM approached Scotland County along with Richmond, Halifax, Franklin, Chatham and others with the same proposal.

In August of 2005, Richmond County began the process of franchising with Waste Management. Scotland County began the process in September/October 2005. At the time most everyone figured the landfill would go in Richmond County, not Scotland.

As Scotland County moved forward in the process, other waste companies approached the County asking that their proposals be considered, too. Waste Industries and Republic both asked the County to be considered for the landfill project.

Opposition groups in both Richmond and Scotland counties formed in November/December 2005 and were successful in generating interest in opposing the landfills.

In February of 2006, SCOT (Scotland County of Tomorrow) held its first public meeting at the Courthouse, one which generated a lot of support against the landfill. With few coming forward to support the landfill, both Richmond and Scotland counties halted the process.

In Scotland County, a group of proponents did come forward in support of the project. As a result, the Commissioners established a Solid Waste Advisory Committee to review the issues. Recommendations from the committee, comprised of proponents and opponents, went to the Commissioners. The Commissioners reviewed the options, which included siting its own landfill, contracting directly with other counties to

see landfill, page 4

Citizens save with drug card

The 134 prescriptions filled in September and October with the NACo Prescription Drug Discount Card accounted for a \$1,603 savings.

Multiple prescriptions were filled by 66 citizens when they presented the card to pharmacies during that two-month period.

The 42 prescriptions filled in September totaled \$2,078 for participating citizens compared to a retail value of \$2,626 had the discount card not been presented. In October, 92 prescriptions at a discount total of \$3,033 would have retailed at \$4,087 without the card.

In some cases, the retail price will be lower than the plan price and will be applied accordingly. In October, for instance, the pharmacy offered a lower price on 15 of the 92 prescriptions filled under the plan.

In October, the average member cost per prescription was \$32.97 compared to \$44.43 retail. In September, the average cost per prescription was \$49.48 compared to \$62.53 retail.

Scotland County is one of 26 participating North Carolina counties. The discount cards are free and available at any County facility, including DSS, the Health Department and at the County Annex at 231 East Cronly Street.

The cards may be used immediately. There is no enrollment form and no membership fee. The prescription discount card may be used any time your prescription is not covered by insurance. There are no restrictions and no limits on how many times you may use the card.

Sponsored by NACo (National Association of Counties), the program is administered by Caremark.

Message from the Manager

As we head towards the end of the calendar year, I think it is important to reflect on some of the accomplishments the County has achieved during my tenure and to look forward to those that we will achieve in the coming months.



John A. Crumpton

1. Recreation Complex — Work is almost complete at the Complex. When I started here a little more than a year ago, the project was at a standstill. We were in danger of losing the State grant funding for lack of work on the project. In December, the softball/baseball fields, Frisbee golf, picnic shelters and new playground equipment will all be completed. Three new soccer fields will be completed in the spring and should be ready for play in the fall of 2007.

2. Tax Rate and Financial Stability — The County has held the tax rate the same for the last three years while building on its Fund Balance. By cutting expenses and holding the line on new programs, the County is now fiscally strong. In the coming budget year (07-08) the Commissioners are looking at lowering the tax rate. If the State continues the cap on Medicaid expenses and the increase from the School Formula stays under five percent, the County will be able to lower the tax rate next year. This should be a big boost to business and the citizens of Scotland County.

3. Development of Partnerships with the City of Laurinburg and School System — The County's working relationship with its two largest partners has never been better. With the collaborative effort to develop a countywide GIS system with City of Laurinburg and the County's cooperative relationship with the School System, services are expected to improve while saving the taxpayers money. The County also signed an agreement with the Town of Wagram to collect their taxes. This generated revenue for the County and helped the Town of Wagram in its tax collections.

4. Tax Incentive Packages — Recently negotiated tax incentives for Butler Manufacturing and Arvin Meritor created 200 new jobs and an investment of \$4 million.

5. Employee Safety — With the institution of a new safety policy claims decreased by 20 percent compared to FY 2005-2006.

6. Medicaid Lobbying Efforts — Lobbying efforts with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners resulted in a cap of Medicaid expenses for FY 2006-2007, which will save Scotland County \$350,000 in the current fiscal year.

7. Courthouse Improvements — The County plans to correct roof problems at the Courthouse. Statement of Qualifications from Architects and Engineers were received November 29. The Commissioners will review the Statements of Qualifications and perhaps select an architect/engineer for the project at the December 4 regular meeting.

8. Covington Street Move — Working space for Courthouse operations will increase when Administration, Finance and other departments from the Annex move to Covington Street. The move will allow departments to operate more efficiently at minimum cost to taxpayers.

The accomplishments achieved and the ones that will be achieved in the first two years of my tenure suggest that much is getting done whether or not the public sees it.

Have a great Christmas Holiday, and thanks to everyone for all of your hard work.



Newly elected officials including
Commissioners-elect
**Betty Blue Gholston, Guy McCook
and J.D. Willis** and
Sheriff-elect **Shep Jones**
will be sworn in by
Superior Court Judge B. Craig Ellis
9 a.m. Monday, December 4, 2006
Main Courtroom
Scotland County Courthouse

The public is invited to attend

A reception will be held
in the lobby of the
Scotland County Courthouse
immediately following
the ceremony



**Elliott thanked
Chairman J.D. Willis presents a
plaque to Jan Elliott, who will
retire as Director of Social
Services December 31. Elliott
served as Director of the agency
for six years and has been
involved in social work for more
than three decades.**

You're invited to John Blue holiday events

Christmas candle-light tours will be held for the first time ever at the John Blue House December 11 and 12 and 18 and 19.

The 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. tour is \$3 a person. Light refreshments will be served.

On December 10, visit Santa at the John Blue House from 1p.m. to 5 p.m.

A 5x7 color photo of your child with Santa and Mrs. Claus is \$5. The fee also will cover a ride on the Cotton Blossom Train.



News of Note

Staff directory on the web

A comprehensive staff directory has been added to the County website at www.scotlandcounty.org/emailtc.htm. EMS Dispatcher Tommy Hatcher updates the directory quarterly with information supplied by the various departments.

Solid waste services extended

The Board of Commissioners agreed to extend an option for solid waste services with Republic for five years. Under the original agreement with Republic, which operates the Uhwarrie Environmental Landfill in Montgomery County, the County's agreement was set to expire December 31, 2007. The new agreement extends the service to December 31, 2012.

Trail Grant targets Washington Park

A paved eight-foot-wide looped walking trail will be developed at Washington Park thanks to a \$25,000 NC Trails Grant awarded to the County. The City of Laurinburg will provide the \$5,000 matching monies required, which will be in the form of cash and donated services. Length of the trail will be a minimum 1/3 of a mile. Benches and a bike rack also will be installed.

Welcome signs honor champions

Scotland County welcome signs might soon pay homage to the High School's 2006 4A Baseball Champions. The Board of Commissioners, by resolution, asked the Department of Transportation to place signs honoring the team's championship on the welcome signs at each major entrance into the County. The signs honoring the team were donated by the City of Laurinburg.

Chairmen photos on display

A photo gallery of former Board Chairmen is on display in the Commissioners Chamber. There have been 25 Chairmen, not including the current Chairman, since Scotland County's incorporation in 1900. In instances where a photo could not be located, the Scotland County seal is in the frame. All feature the engraved name and years in service as Chairman.

City/County to provide joint GIS

The County and the City of Laurinburg will partner in the countywide administration of the Geographic Information Systems (GIS). As part of the interlocal agreement, the City will direct the day-to-day operation, planning and management of the GIS. The agreement will be reviewed annually, and budgets provided by the County and the City also must be reviewed and approved on an annual basis.



4-H prepares for 2007 theme

Scotland County 4-H youth Cherrell Brown, pictured, Kenya McNeill and volunteer Precious Byrd attended the annual 4-H State Council Conference November 18 to 19 in Greensboro. District and state officers selected a 4-H theme focus in 2007. "Cloverology, a Scientific Solution" will highlight AgriScience, Technology/Electricity, Environmental Science and Air and Space. Brown announced her candidacy for 2007-2008 State 4-H Reporter.

EMStatistics

EMS Report for October:

Responded to 413 Medical/Trauma calls

Treated 51 motor vehicle accident patients

Administered 52 wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 39 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

405 EMS

236 Sheriff's Department

201 Laurinburg Police Department

45 Fire Department

605 hang-up calls

119 wrong numbers

30 open line calls

1,177 cellular calls

1,887 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS Response

58 breathing problems

52 sick person (specific diagnosis)

51 traffic accidents

34 transfer/interfacility/palliative care

33 chest pain

Weather Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 89 on 10/5

Temp (low) 32 on 10/24,25

Wind (mph) 28 on 10/1

Rainfall (inches) 1 on 10/8

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

More progress made at Rec Complex



An aerial view of the Recreation Complex, compliments of the City of Laurinburg, is a great example of the progress being made there. The infields and outfields and the irrigation system have been completed, and the playground equipment is in place.

The concession stand was 90 percent complete by the third week of November awaiting installation of toilet fixtures. With the outfield fencing in place, back stops and dugouts were under construction.

County Engineer Jim Blackwell said, "Some sidewalk concrete has been placed and additional concrete will be poured. Paving was scheduled for the last week in November and final grading and grassing is underway is expected to be completed by then, too."

Scotland County received a 2005 Award of Excellence from the UnitedWay. The award is given to companies with at least 10 employees and the amount pledged averages at least \$50 per employee. ✂ Congratulations to Inspections Director **Ernest Stephens** on completing all the necessary qualifications for Mechanical Inspector Level III. ✂ Congratulations to **Karen Chavis**, who graduated from the DSS Leadership Program and received a framed reminder of what leadership represents. Chavis completed training in a variety of areas that will help in both work and personal leadership roles. She developed a project that helped teen foster children have a better understanding of budgeting, shopping, nutrition and meal preparation. Chavis is a leadworker in our Food Stamp program and has been with Scotland County DSS since 1998. ✂ **Terry Byrd**, Soil and Water, welcomed grandson William Andrew Gainey, born November 17.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to **Joy Nolan**, Public Works, on the death of her grandmother.

the Birthday list for December

2 Tammy McRae (Jail), Peggy Robinson (Health) and Kimberly Cheek (DSS); **4** Lloyd Goins (Jail); **5** David Newton (Sheriff), John Deese (EMS) and Wendy Stanton (DSS); **6** Amy Ratley and Tracie Patterson (EMS); **7** Joyce Maynor (DSS); **10** James Brown (Public Works); **14** Patricia Wells (DSS); **15** Morrison Lockey (EMS); **17** Kathie Cox (Health); **18** Nicki Peek (Health); **20** Gail Wright (Administration); **21** Teresa Gorden (DSS); **23** Barbara Ledbetter (DSS); **24** Sandra Leonard (DSS) and Anne Tindall (Administration); **26** John Alford (Commissioner/Sheriff); **27** Martin Davis (Public Buildings), Elfreda Locklear (DSS) and Holly Storey (EMS); **29** Nikki Jackson (DSS); **31** Mary Freeman (Tax), Mary Armstrong (Health), Marcia Coble (DSS) and Debbie Davis (Transportation).

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since September 16, 2006: **Ron Sapp** and **Tina Ellis**, Health; **Jackie Locklear** and **Steven Dover**, Jail; **Judith Griggs** and **Marcus Brown**, Sheriff; **Tammy Cole**, DSS; **Andrew Ansley**, part-time with EMS; and **Arletha Davis**, part-time with Parks and Recreation.



Robert Sampson, EMS, cradles daughter Emily Rose, born November 10.



DSS presented certificates to staff in recognition of years of service with the agency. Staff recognized were Sandy Skamperle, 25 years, left; Jennie Lowe, 10 years; James McQueen, 5 years, right; Lakeisha Patterson, 5 years, center; and Wendy Stanton, 5 years.

Landfill issue challenges County

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host a regional landfill, continuing to handle solid waste as the County does now or contracting directly with a solid waste company to develop and operate a regional landfill.

After a lengthy review, the Commissioners proposed a site and selected a private company to construct and operate a landfill. The Commissioners optioned the Jordan Properties location in July 2006, picked Waste Management as the preferred contractor and directed staff to begin environmental testing of the site. State Legislature that same month passed a permit moratorium on new landfills.

If all that sounds confusing, then it probably is to some extent. It is important to keep in mind that the County Commissioners are in control of the option on the Jordan property. The County Commissioners authorized consulting/engineering firm GN Richardson to conduct environmental testing on the site. The County Commissioners do not have a franchise or a contract with Waste Management at this time. Lastly, the State continues to operate under the permit moratorium.

Going forward the Commissioners are concerned about several issues. First, they want to maintain control of the site for as long as possible. Control assures the Commissioners they will receive all environmental data on the proposed site and they will review all site plans.

Consultant GN Richardson has placed 12 shallow wells and two deep wells on the Jordan property in order to monitor groundwater. The Commissioners will not move forward until they have assurance the site is environmentally safe. Additionally, the Commissioners are closely monitoring the Legislature Environmental Commission (LEC) and the Environmental Justice Committee (EJC) hearings.

The LEC reviews all franchise and siting rules for Subtitle D landfills during the moratorium while the EJC reviews the affects landfills have on poor and minority communities. Both Committees will make recommendations to the Legislature before the moratorium ends.

Any changes in permitting or franchising rules could have an impact on the project here. It is difficult but not impossible for the Commissioners to move forward with the final franchise before the moratorium ends. Under the new franchise rules adopted by the State in July 2006, the Commissioners could issue a preliminary franchise to Waste Management. The difference between a preliminary franchise and a final franchise is the final franchise must also have the site plan in place. Developing the site plan will take months.

Input on the site plan from the State is required, too. It will be difficult for State employees to give input on the site plan while the moratorium is in place. The prudent thing to do is for the next several months is to wait and to watch to see what direction the State will take with regard to the permit rules.

At some point next year, the Commissioners will have important decisions to make on how they want to proceed. In January, the Commissioners will hold a planning retreat, and I expect the issue on how to proceed will be discussed. GN Richardson will give the Commissioners an update on the testing of the site.

The process of permitting and siting a landfill is long and complicated. The moratorium prolongs the process. I will keep everyone informed of the developments as the Commissioners continue to work through this process. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact me or County Engineer Jim Blackwell.

Introductions
& transitions