

Scotland County Monthly



SEPTEMBER 2007

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Community thanks legislators

The community turned out to thank Scotland County's area legislators for their efforts in bringing about a permanent solution to relieve counties of the cost of Medicaid.

The reception for Senator Bill Purcell and Representatives Doug Yongue and Garland Pierce was hosted by the Board of Commissioners at Scotland Place.

Chairman J.D. Willis said over the past several years the Commissioners "were leaning on their legislators, asking them for help."

Willis added, "They had to get their colleagues to support them. Thank you very very very much."

The legislators each were presented with a framed proclamation of appreciation.

Purcell explained that a resolution to Medicaid relief took several years because it had become a "fairness issue." He explained that some of the proposals for permanent Medicaid relief would not necessarily benefit those who lived in poor counties.

Purcell also credited the persistence of the County Commissioners in seeking some form of Medicaid relief at the State level.

Yongue said the Medicaid plan is the best piece of legislation he has seen since 1994 when he began serving in Raleigh as a local Representative.

Pierce said team work resulted in successful Medicaid legislation. "I am glad for this day and I am glad to be a part of Scotland County."

The State budget provides for a three-year phaseout of county Medicaid expenses in exchange for a gradual assumption of a half-cent local sales tax.

Scotland County is expected to receive a hold harmless payment to guarantee a net benefit of \$500,000.

In the second year the State will take one-half of the Article 44 sales taxes. This will be a loss of approximately \$740,000 compared to an estimated savings of \$2 million.

By year three the State will take all Article 44 sales taxes and change the method of distribution for other sales taxes from per capita to point of delivery.

This would represent a revenue loss of approximately \$2.2 million compared to a savings on Medicaid expenses of \$4.4.

Pictured above, during the presentation of Proclamations are, left to right, Senator Bill Purcell, Representatives Doug Yongue and Garland Pierce, Interim County Manager Kevin Patterson, Chairman J.D. Willis, Commissioner Joyce McDow, Commissioner Leon Butler, Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioner John Alford.



Methane gas sales explored

Scotland County will be looking at ways to create jobs and stimulate the economy while going a little green in the process.

The County, in collaboration with Appalachian State University Energy Center and the Golden LEAF Foundation, will turn methane gas from its now closed municipal solid waste landfill into carbon credits for revenue.

Representatives from the Appalachian State Energy Center

were on hand to explain the process and brainstorm on beneficial ways to create carbon credits through a gas collection system.

ASU Energy Center Executive Director Dennis Grady said, "Once Scotland County decides what it wants to do, the Energy Center will write the grants. The main purpose is to create jobs with this project."

He added, "Since methane is 23 times more potent than greenhouse carbon, people will buy those methane carbon credits, which is a form of gas collection system."

Citizens and community representatives discussed a variety

of projects for the landfill gas which might bring in revenue and create jobs.

"If you get a good project going, that would be our measure of success," said Grady.

Stan Steury of the ASU Energy Center said, "You will be taking a wasted resource and making something useful out of it. Since the gas is a hazard to the environment, anything that could be done to destroy that gas is good."



The CommunityTIES Project is a landfill gas development initiative working with counties in North Carolina to facilitate development of landfill gas-to-energy projects that are community-based with a primary focus on generating economic development outcomes.

Staff Health Fairs a success

The four dates scheduled this year for the Health Fair attracted 211 participants, which is a 25 percent increase in the participation rate over last year when 168 employees took advantage of the event.

An additional Health Fair held at the Sheriff's Department helped boost the participation rate.

"The employees seemed very appreciative of the Health Fair and most recognized this as a huge benefit for them," said Human Resources Manager Susan Butler.

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Conservation tips save water

Scotland is one of 93 counties in the State experiencing exceptional to severe drought conditions. Scotland County had 7.51 inches of rain since January 2007 and is among many counties statewide that exceeded record lows set in 2002.

With no significant rainfall predicted in the near future, drought conditions will persist and are likely to worsen.

Near-record heat in many areas, combined with below average precipitation, led to the worsening drought conditions.

Consider adopting the following conservation measures that allow you to save water and money without much inconvenience.

1. Water your lawn only when it needs it. Step on your grass. If it springs back when you lift your foot, it doesn't need water. Set sprinklers for more days in between watering to save 750 to 1,500 gallons per month. Better yet, especially in a drought, water with a hose.

2. Fix leaky faucets and plumbing joints. This saves 20 gallons per day for every leak stopped.

3. Don't run the hose while washing your car. Use a bucket of water and a quick hose rinse at the end to save 150 gallons each time you wash the car.

4. Install water-saving shower heads or flow restrictors to saves 500 to 800 gallons per month.

5. Run only full loads in the washing machine and dishwasher to save 300 to 800 gallons per month.

6. Shorten showers. Even a one or two minute reduction can save up to 700 gallons per month.

7. Use a broom instead of a hose to clean driveways and sidewalks to saves 150 gallons or more each time.

8. Don't use your toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket and save 400 to 600 gallons per month.

9. Capture tap water. While you wait for hot water to come down the pipes, catch the flow in a watering can to use later on house plants or in your garden. This saves 200 to 300 gallons per month.

10. Don't water the sidewalks, driveway or gutter. Adjust sprinklers so that water lands on your lawn or garden where it belongs to save 500 gallons per month.

Prescription Discount Card plan catching on slowly in community

More than \$18,000 was saved by citizens who took advantage of the Prescription Drug Discount Card over the past year.

The total number of prescriptions presented at area pharmacies increased from 42 in September 2006 to 189 in August 2007. Of the 189 cards presented in August, in 113 cases the card offered the best price compared to the pharmacy price.

The August average drug cost per prescription at the card discounted price was \$24.07. The average drug retail price would have been \$32.66 if the discount card was not submitted. All prescriptions filled with the card in August resulted in a savings of \$1,623.88.

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since July 16, 2007: **Danielle Wilkins**, Health; **Quinton Williamson**, Jail; **Scott Norton**, Sheriff;

Nancy Pittman and **Shekesha McPhatter**, DSS; **Holly Russell**, Parks and Recreation and **Doris Donovan**, part-time with Parks and Recreation. **James Locklear** and **Leah Fogle** transition from part-time to full-time with EMS; **Timothy Matthews** transitions from temporary to full-time with Public Buildings.



Melissa Whelpley is the firefighter daughter of Dixie Whelpley, Tax Office.

Employee's daughter named City's first female firefighter

If Scotland County had its own **Guinness Book of Records**, then Melissa Whelpley would be listed in it.

Melissa, 20, daughter of Dixie Whelpley, Tax, became a paid female volunteer firefighter for the City of Laurinburg and the first female firefighter in the history of the municipality.

Melissa successfully completed an agility test to qualify for this distinction. "I began a training course in full turnout gear by going through a maze and then climbing upstairs in the Department's smoke house."

She added, "I had to drag a training dummy, use a charged hose to knock down a cone and climb the new ladder truck, which stands 100-feet high."

"The test was timed and very exhausting. The ending result was worth all the sweat. I was officially a firefighter," Whelpley said.

Melissa's mother, Dixie, said her daughter was initially involved with Laurinburg's fire department through the Explorer Program sponsored by the high school.

The program teamed students with law enforcement and fire departments so youth would consider their future career choices and better understand the important role these agencies have in protecting communities.

Melissa drifted away from the City's fire department activities after her 2005 graduation from Scotland High School.

The October 2006 death of her fiancé, Justin Callahan, in an automobile accident caused Melissa to rethink her future. That introspection brought her back to Laurinburg's Fire Department where she had made friends and experienced the rewards of helping others in need.

"The firefighters encouraged Melissa to get back into it," said Dixie. "Melissa feels this is what Justin would have wanted her to do."

2007 Atlantic Hurricane Outlook

13-17 named storms

7-10 hurricanes

3-5 major hurricanes

Courthouse move nears completion

The Public Defender's office and Intensive Probation have relocated to the Annex on Cronly Street. The Adult Probation move to the Annex will occur in early October.

The move frees up much-needed office space in an overcrowded Courthouse.

Once new carpeting was installed, the Public Defender moved into the former Inspections and County Engineer offices.

Nine Administration offices were divided into 14 spaces for Intensive Probation. The County Manager's office, Clerk's office and reception area were turned into seven offices.

The mail room will serve as a conference room for Intensive and Adult Probation.

Cooperative Extension and Elections will remain in the Annex at this time.

No change in procedure to reserve the conference room

Use of the Annex conference room by Courthouse staff will most likely increase now that Probation and Parole and the Public Defender have moved to 231 East Cronly Street.

With the exception of a court proceeding, which would take precedence over its use, reserving the conference room space has not changed.

Those who wish to reserve the space may check on its availability by contacting Cooperative Extension at 910-277-2422.



The County Manager's office and reception area was turned into seven offices.

Health Tip

If you're famished, eat a little fat before you sit down for a meal. Eating healthy fat 20 minutes before a meal can keep you from stuffing yourself. It fools your brain into thinking you're not as hungry as you thought. And your waist will reap the rewards. About 70 calories of healthy fat just before you eat — that's six walnuts, 12 almonds or 20 peanuts — can trick you into thinking you're full. Eating good fats stimulates the production of cholecystokinin (CCK), a hormone that tells your brain you've had enough to eat and then keeps you feeling full by slowing the emptying of your stomach. So when you sit down for a meal, you'll eat for pleasure, not for hunger, and you'll

be likely to eat less. **Source: RealAge.com**

Post Scripts

Cooperative Extension raised about \$3,000 from its estate sale. The money will be used as an initial investment toward a capital campaign for the construction of new space for the agency. ☘ Public Buildings staff **Hyder Massey, Mike McGirt, Leroy Davis, Tim Matthews, Ricky Locklear, Larry Locklear** and **James McQueen** received Certificates of Appreciation from the Board of Commissioners. The employees were recognized for the work they do daily to maintain the 19 parks and the facilities. They also were thanked for prepping the Recreation Complex grounds for the first tournament. ☘ **Reggie Franklin, EMS**, celebrates three years of employment.

Tarp Day part of lesson in reducing roadside litter

People taking trash in unsecured loads to the landfill this month received a warning **and** a gift.

Solid Waste Enforcement Officer J.R. "Bobby" Horne stood watch at the landfill to make sure people bringing trash had it properly covered.

Those who didn't were given a free tarp.

"A lot of roadside debris comes from vehicle loads that are not properly covered or secured," said Horne.

"Securing loads with a tarp is an easy solution to reducing future littering," Horne explained.

Bumps, turns and sudden stops can dislodge improperly secured loads.

Secured loads improve fuel economy and keep loads dry, clean and safe.

Toolboxes and other built-in containers can be used to hold trash until it can be placed in a garbage can.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation spent \$16 million last year

picking up litter from the State's roadsides.

Nationwide, about 25,000 accidents can be attributed to roadside debris annually.

Careless drivers could wind up picking up their own litter.

Penalties for littering include a \$2,000 fine, community service work and one point on a motorist's driver license upon conviction.

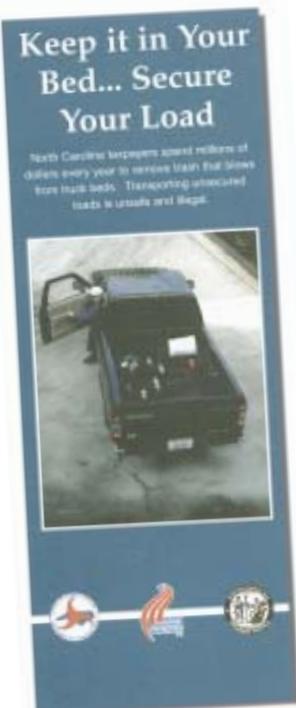
Tarp Day was one of several events that will take place during the statewide fall 2007 Litter Sweep.

Tarps were also distributed at Harris Teeter September 22 by Horne and the Chamber of Commerce Image Committee.

Of the 120 tarps received from the State, 12 were given away at Harris Teeter and 27 at the landfill.

The remainder will be made available at the five Recycle Centers and through the Image Committee.

Horne also will give tarps away at the October 4 Environmental Awareness Day sponsored by the Soil and Water Office.



EMStatistics

EMS Report for August:

Responded to 399 Medical/

Trauma calls

Treated 44 total traffic accident patients

Administered 93 wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 13 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

401 EMS

301 Sheriff's Department

270 Laurinburg Police Department

97 Fire Department

655 hang-up calls

73 wrong numbers

52 open line calls

1,344 cellular calls

2,102 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS Response

51 sick person (specific diagnosis)

48 breathing problems

44 traffic accidents

34 chest pain

33 falls/back injuries (traumatic)

Weather Observations (EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 107 on 8/8,9

Temp (low) 68 on 8/4

Wind (mph) 21 on 8/15,21

Rainfall (inches) .38 on 8/22

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

Record participation in Health Fair attendance

continued from page 1

"The employees received a free 'mini-physical' that included a blood screening for cholesterol, triglyceride and glucose levels."

Butler added, "They also received a blood pressure reading, and all females over 40 years of age were offered the bone density test."

"The results were printed immediately and given to each employee with an explanation of what the results meant," Butler said.

"Employees also were given information on how to improve their results or continue with their good results."

Since employees were required to fast for 12 hours prior to their appointment time, a continental breakfast was served after their tests were completed.

Door prizes and one grand prize were awarded on each of the four Health Fair dates.

Door prizes included \$20 gift certificates from the Chamber of Commerce.

Grand prize for each date was a full set of camping gear, which included a three-person tent, two sleeping bags, a camping lantern and a folding camping chair.

Gift certificates went to Thomas Milligan, Inspections; Jerry Johnson, Elections; Myra Hill, DSS; Van McArthur, Health; Rebecca Griffin, DSS; Kathie

Cox, Health; Jannett Garcia, Health; Charlene Mouzon, DSS; Tammy McRae, Jail; Amanda Patterson, Jail; and Debra Holcomb, Register of Deeds.

Camping gear went to Vincent Locklear, Public Works; Anita Nelson, DSS; Kenneth Wright, Transportation; and James Nichols, Jail.

This year, every employee who participated in the Health Fair and was covered on the County's group health plan with FirstCarolinaCare received a \$30 incentive payment. The County issued 205 payments.

"We hope to keep the momentum going and increase our participation even more next year," Butler said.

Your vote counts at election time

by Jerry Johnson, Board of Elections

There is no greater right than the right to vote — to participate in the electoral process and to make your voice heard.

As the Municipal Election nears, the Scotland County Board of Elections urges you to exercise this fundamental right.

Remember that Presidents Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln all stood in line with other voters to cast their ballots.

If you should have any questions or concerns about registering to vote or voting, call 277-2595 or come by the Board of Elections Office at 231 East Cronly Street.

To avoid having to vote a provisional ballot, register to vote and/or keep your registration up to date. If you have a name change or party change you must fill out a new voter registration form.

There are two ways to report an address change; one is to fill out a new voter registration form or mail or drop off a note/letter to the Board of Elections Office stating your old address, your new address and a statement that you have moved. This must be done at least 30 days before the election. The note/letter must be signed. Deadline to register or make changes is October 12.

There are three ways voters can exercise their right to participate in the electoral process. One-Stop Early Voting is scheduled from October 5 to November 3. During this voting period only, a person may register and vote at the same time. No Excuse Absentee by mail is another option. October 5 is the first day to request while last day to request is October 30. Requests must be in the Board of Elections Office by 5 p.m. and completed ballots must be returned to the Board of Elections Office by 5 p.m. November 5.

Finally, Election Day is November 6 for those who did not vote by absentee mail or during the One-Stop Early Voting process.



Employees visited the First Health clinic on wheels for their mini-physicals.

the Birthday list for October

Brayboy (Tax); **19** Tessie Cousar (Health); **21** Frances McLean (DSS); **22** Rachel Beach (Inspections) and Alicia Krout (Parks and Recreation); **23** Cory Baldwin (EMS), Teresa Herring and Margaret Nicholson (Health) and Beverly Wranosky (DSS); **24** George Britt (Sheriff); **25** Debra Maske (Health); **26** Danny Sprouse (Health); **28** Edna Sherrer (Health) and Vicky Locklear (Tax); **29** Thomas Milligan (Inspections); **31** Tommy Hatcher (EMS) and Antonia Rainer (DSS).