



SCOTLAND COUNTY MONTHLY

AUGUST 2003

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Ribbon-cutting at new prison paves way for full operation

Nearly 300 area and State representatives celebrated the ribbon cutting at Scotland Correctional Institution. The 1,000-cell close custody facility cost \$70 million to construct over a 21-month period.

Inmates, all adult males, will be transported in stages to the facility beginning this week. No death row inmates are housed at the institution.

"This project transcends nearly a decade of united leadership for the Board of Commissioners who had the vision and the political will to invest County tax dollars to buy the land and insure the infrastructure was ready ahead of schedule for the prison," said Chairman David L. Burns in an opening statement.

"To buy a piece of raw land for something that might happen is a gutsy thing to do," said Burns. "I want to commend all the County Commissioners over the past eight years who put it all on the line."

Former State Senator Aaron Plyler, credited with being the driving force behind getting the prison located in Scotland County,



Administrator Don Wood, left, escorts former Senator Aaron Plyler, State Representative Doug Yongue and Chairman David L. Burns, left to right, on a tour of Scotland Correctional Institution.

said it would not have been possible without the joint effort and support of the State, citizens and local governments of the surrounding counties. "This will be good for the economy and the community."

see Prison, page 6

Health officials alert residents to mosquito-borne infection

The Health Department is distributing educational materials and conducting town meetings in response to a confirmed case of Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

A child who lives in Scotland County has been infected with EEE and is hospitalized in critical condition.

The Health Department also will distribute the Gambusia minnow to citizens who may have natural or manmade ponds or difficulty with standing water on their properties. The minnow is a voracious top-water feeder that preys on mosquitoes in the larval stage and is effective in controlling mosquito populations.

State and local public health officials held a news conference August 24 to provide information to the media and community on EEE, other mosquito-transmitted diseases and measures for prevention.

Dr. Jeffrey Engel, a State representative who specializes in

communicable diseases, said EEE in humans is extremely rare. Since 1964, there have only been 14 confirmed cases of EEE in humans.

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Chairman David Burns, left, thanks U.S. Rep. Robin Hayes for his support in securing funding for the Youth Recreation Complex.

\$500,000 grant earmarked for recreation site

A \$500,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant has been awarded to the County for the development of the comprehensive Youth Recreation Complex.

Awarding the LWCF grant came just days after the Board of Commissioners received \$312,952 from Housing and Urban Development, which will fund the construction of a splash park on the site by summer 2004.

The \$500,000 is one of four grants awarded by LWCF in 2003 — three to local governments and one to a State agency — all geared toward outdoor recreation in North Carolina.

Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton said the LWCF grant and planned splash park construction keep up the momentum for continued support of the recreation project.

Newton and Youth Center Task Force representative Becca Hughes credit much of the project's success to the support of U.S. Rep. Robin Hayes.

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Permanent stage on John Blue property makes Festival debut



Members of the community inspect the stage, which will be completed in time for the John Blue Cotton Festival.

A permanent stage will provide the setting for most of the entertainment at the annual John Blue Cotton Festival, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

The 40 x 35 foot structure located in the far left corner of the John Blue property was made possible through a \$10,000 grant from the Scotland Tourism Development Authority.

Public Buildings staff and community service workers helped build the platform, stairs and back railing for fall protection based on a conceptual design submitted by Jim Blue, a John Blue Cotton Festival committee member.

Prior to the 2003 event, which is scheduled for October 11 and 12, festival entertainers made use of a portable, temporary stage.

The stage is a welcome addition to the John Blue property since it creates a variety of options for regularly scheduled musical and cultural events, according to Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton.

A Parks and Recreation Advisory Board subcommittee is now discussing guidelines for usage and fees.

Board of Elections takes oath



Register of Deeds Jane Callahan delivers the oath of office to Board of Elections Directors, they are, left to right, Russell Baker, Dolores Ingram and John Stewart. Ingram was appointed Chair, succeeding Stewart, during a reorganization meeting of the Board.

Post Scripts

County Engineer **Jim Blackwell** addressed the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners at its annual conference August 16. Blackwell spoke about the County's abandoned mobile home recycling program, which has been recognized as one of the leaders in this activity. Blackwell and his staff have shared this information with other counties as well.

☞ **Gail Wright** attended the Carolinas Association of Governmental Purchasing in New Bern, July 28 to 31. ☞ **In Health Department** news: Congratulations to **Betty Smith** for being our Employee of the Month for June. We wish **Teresa Wilcox** a speedy recovery. **Betsey Ellerbe** was given a baby shower by staff after work August 14 at the Family Center.

Condolences to **Frances Moody** in the death of her father-in-law. **Mary Cox's** daughter, Christina, participated in an academic program at MIT this summer. Christina was one of 80 high school students from more than 500 student applicants nationwide selected to participate in the engineering internship.

Melinda Salley welcomes son, Will, home from Tokyo, where he completed an internship in research and development with Nipon Paper. The agency participated in a team building workshop August 22 with Cooperative Extension Director **Cathy Graham** facilitating. Congratulations to **Stephanie McDonald** on her August 9 marriage to Antonio Patterson.

☞ EMS employee anniversaries for August include **Gwen Ikner**, 13 years and **Barry Roberts**, 5 years. ☞ Our condolences to **Hyder Massey**, Public Buildings, on the death of his brother, Lewis. ☞ Best wishes to **Gene Jackson**, Public Buildings, as he recovers from surgery. ☞ **Al Blades**, **Shannon Newton** and **Carol McCall** were on hand at St. Andrews August 22 to greet new students and their families and to provide them with information about Parks and Recreation activities.

The Parks and Recreation table was one of dozens in the community taking part in the goodwill gesture designed to welcome students to Scotland County. ☞ **DSS** raised a little more than \$700 during its yard sale to benefit Relay for Life. A small portion of the money will be set aside for the agency's Foster Care Program. ☞ Jeramie Kyle Hockman, 15-year-old Scotland High School student, attended a Resource Conservation Workshop on the NC State University campus in Raleigh in June. The workshop, sponsored by the Division of Soil and Water Conservation, is a week of intensive study where participants learn about natural resources and their management in today's environment. Jeramie updated the **Scotland Soil and Water Conservation District** on his week of study at its August meeting.

The son of Brian and Cindy Hockman of Laurel Hill, Jeramie works with his father in the family-owned landscaping business.



Jeramie Hockman and Terry Gainey, administrative assistant with the Soil and Water Conservation Office.

Notes from the County Manager

Greetings. We extend our prayers to the family whose child has been infected with Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

In a written statement, the family urged "every citizen...to make protection from mosquito bites your highest priority. One minute of precautionary spraying (with 30% DEET)...could save you years of pain and heartache."

Public information meetings on EEE are listed below.



Scott Sauer

Town meetings on EEE set

The Health Department has scheduled a series of information sessions communitywide on Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Tuesday, September 2

7 p.m., Scotland County Commissioner Chamber, 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg

7:30 p.m., Laurel Hill Fire Department, Pate Street, Laurel Hill

Thursday, September 4

7 p.m., Gibson Fire Department, 4681 Main Street, Gibson

7 p.m., Wagram Town Council, Meeting 24341 Riverton Road, Wagram

More lemonade



Cooperative Extension Director Cathy Graham, second from right, takes Health Department employees through one of a series of team building exercises. Graham was invited to facilitate an additional workshop on Turning Lemons into Lemonade.

Rep. Hayes thanked for support

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It was through Hayes' efforts that the Youth Center Task Force received an initial \$100,000 federal HUD grant last year. The \$100,000 financed a contract with Site Solutions, an architectural landscape firm that developed the comprehensive site plan and study.

Since then, more than \$1 million has been raised in support of the complex, including a \$250,000 matching grant from the Scotland County Board of Commissioners. The Board's approval of the matching grant helped secure a \$250,000 Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant and the most recent \$500,000 award from LWCF.

Hurricane season plans discussed at annual meeting

Not since 1954 has Scotland County suffered a hurricane of devastating proportions. That was the year of Hazel.

Roylin Hammond hopes Hazel's record stands and the 2003 hurricane season will pass as quietly as it did in 2002.

"Last year at this time we had a drought, but not this year," Hammond explained. "The ground is saturated, and flooding is possible. If we have any inland event there would be numerous traffic hazards and more downed trees."

Although hurricane season officially began June 1, North Carolina is usually more at risk in August and September.

Twelve named storms are predicted for 2003, and eight might develop into hurricanes. "So far there have been seven events, and several have been tropical depressions," said Hammond.

As head of Emergency Management in Scotland County, Hammond gathered nearly 50 individuals critical to activation of the Emergency Operations Center prior to and/or after a major weather event.

Website information

www.scotlandcounty.org/EMS
Emergency Operations Plan

www.ncem.org
Hurricane Updates

Hammond initiated the briefing with a round of introductions. "All the players here have a good idea of who is responsible for what. This is an opportunity to associate the names with the faces. We don't see all of you on a day-to-day basis, but in a disaster, we do want to see all of you."

Hammond expects more funding for emergency operations this year than in the past. Scotland County will receive \$43,000 in federal funds, up from last year's \$13,000.

Most of the funding — \$35,000 — would purchase equipment. The remaining \$8,000 would support first-responder training. Hammond expects an additional \$110,000 later this year for local Homeland Security programs.

Two disaster-related issues will be addressed in the near future, according to Hammond. Providing shelters for special populations for people who are homebound or require home health assistance or are nursing or rest home residents is one issue.

A second issue would be the development of a plan on how to effectively operate the County Receiving Point located at the vehicle garage of the public school system.

The Scotland County Annex is the primary Emergency Operation Center while the secondary site is at Scotland Memorial Hospital's Dulin Center. "A mobile trailer with communications equipment will be available in the future," Hammond said.

He concluded the annual meeting on a light note. "Nothing personal, but I hope I don't see you again until this time next year."

Silent auction boosts Relay for Life campaign

With \$1,200 brought in with its first fund-raising effort to support Relay for Life and the American Cancer Society, the Health Department was well on its way to reaching its 2003 goal of \$4,000.

The auction along with several other Health Department-sponsored fundraisers has brought in nearly \$3,000 so far.

The generosity of bidders was credited with the success of the BIG Silent Auction, the first of several fund-raising events hosted by the Health Department.

The more than 100 items auctioned, which included baked goods, crafts and gifts, were donated by Health Department employees.

Lynda McMillan and Terena Taylor organized this year's fund-raising campaign.

McMillan has been involved with raising funds for Relay for Life since its inception locally seven years ago. "The Cancer Society provides the Health Department with educational materials, so some funds come back to us through the Relay for Life," said McMillan.

On a more personal note, she added, "Some people who work at the Health Department are cancer survivors."



County employees bid generously and competitively during the Health Department-sponsored silent auction.

include a 50/50 raffle, grilled hot dog sale, ice cream social, lemonade/tea cake sale, Magnificent Mondays Silent Auction, Blue Jean Fridays, dinner at Little Bo's raffle and Blinky Pin sales.

Anyone interested in purchasing a Luminaria, either in memory of or in honor of someone, may contact the Health Department. The cost is \$10.

She added, "I want to see funding for cancer research to continue in the hopes that one day a cure will be found."

For Taylor, who has been involved with the Relay for Life campaign effort four years in a row, her participation began with an experience much closer to home. "My husband is a cancer survivor."

Other fundraisers sponsored by the Health Department and leading up to the September 6 to 7 Relay for Life event

Education key to mosquito issues

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The viral illness, transmitted by mosquitoes, attacks the central nervous system, causes inflammation of the brain and can be fatal to animals and to humans.

Wild birds serve as natural hosts for the virus. Mosquitoes bite the birds and then can transmit the virus to humans and animals. A person cannot catch EEE from another person or directly from an animal.

Symptoms can develop from a few days to two weeks after being bitten by an infected mosquito and include rapid onset of fever and headache. Symptoms can resemble a case of the flu.

Survivors of EEE infections may suffer from long-term effects to the nervous system. Therapy is limited to treating the symptoms of the disease, but there is no specific cure. There is a vaccine for horses, but no vaccine for humans currently exists.

North Carolina is in the midst of a record EEE season for animal infections, and 70 horses have been infected with the disease so far compared to just three in 2002.

Jeff Brown, a State representative who specializes in pest management, said the best way to combat mosquito problems is through education and avoidance.

He said that spraying in rural areas is not effective because the spray rarely drifts far enough from the road to the treeline where most mosquitoes live.

He discussed several preventive measures on how citizens could protect themselves from mosquito bites.

Anyone over two months old can safely wear mosquito repellent containing 30 percent DEET.

Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants to limit the amount of skin available for mosquito bites.

Don't go outside at dusk and dawn, when mosquitoes are most active.

Avoid areas where there are a lot of mosquitoes.

Health Department Director Jane Murray said parents were notified of the confirmed case of EEE through all daycares and public and private schools. More than 6,000 letters focused on mosquito-bite prevention also were distributed. Up to date news releases and information can be found on Scotland County's website at www.scotlandcounty.org.

"Through the collaboration and cooperation of many organizations and concerned citizens, we hope to prevent another resident from becoming infected with any mosquito-borne virus," Murray said.



Health Department Director Jane Murray responds to questions during a press conference. Behind her, left to right, are State health officials Dr. Jeffrey Engel and Jeff Brown.

EMStatistics

EMS Report for July:
Responded to 322 Medical/Trauma calls.

Treated 47 motor vehicle accident patients.

Provided 2 stand-by medical coverages

911 Report Highlights:
Received 1,481 total calls

295 EMS

278 Sheriff's Department
61 Laurinburg Police Department

88 Fire Department

344 hang-up calls

169 wrong numbers

108 open line calls

701 Cellular calls.

Report compiled by Tommy Hatcher.

Quality customer service depends on effective communication

A positive, courteous attitude, listening without interrupting, clarifying information and follow-up all are part of effective to customer service, where communication is key.

During a *Principles of Effective Communication* workshop attended by Scotland County employees Abby Massey, Jan-Marie Fesmire, Billie Jo Phillips and Ann Kurtzman, the focus was on what it takes to go that extra mile in customer service.

Good customer service is much like the Golden Rule — treat others as you would like to be treated. “Learn to view the customer as the job rather than as an interruption of your job,” explained facilitator Susan Hayes of the Randolph County Health Department.

Customers are divided into two groups: External, people outside the organization who you are paid to serve or who pay for your service; and Internal, people inside the organization who interact with us and rely on us for the services, products and information that they need to get their job done.

When providing quality customer service, it’s never too crowded along the “extra mile.”

Hayes explained, “The difference between good service and ‘WOW!’ service is the amount of effort and initiative you take. Always exceed your customer’s expectations.”

While listening to a customer, be aware of positive body language. Hayes advised, “Don’t interrupt or jump to conclusions. Asking effective questions in order to clarify is essential to pleasing the customer.”

Follow-up is what Hayes described as the “icing on the cake.” It ensures that the customer is satisfied.

Hayes outlined telephone basics critical to effective customer service.

- Answer the phone in no more than three rings.
- Greet, identify and offer to help.
- Ask the caller if you can place them on hold and explain why hold is necessary.
- If a transfer is necessary, explain why and ask the caller’s permission to do so.
- In the absence of a coworker, take complete messages.
- End phone calls on a positive note. Ask if there is anything else you can do for the caller. Thank the caller and let him/her hang up first.

Hayes described voicemail as neither good nor bad rather because it’s all in how you use it.

A few tips include: return voicemail messages within 24 hours; change voicemail message when absent from the office more than one day; always answer your phone if you are sitting at your desk.

Hayes said there is an exception to the last voicemail tip. “A ringing phone is like a crying baby. You want to pick it up,” she said. “If you have a customer in your office, let voicemail pick it up. Let the customer know the visit is important to you.”

“Customers want somebody to care and to listen,” Hayes concluded.

401k transition dates, meetings scheduled

The transition from BB&T to Prudential for our 401k plan has some key dates for employees to remember.

September 8 is the final date for any changes with regard to enrollments, contributions, address and/or beneficiaries. September 12 is the final date for loans, disbursements, allocations changes and exchanges.

The plan will be in transition from BB&T to Prudential from September 16 to September 19. Employees will not be able to access their records from September 16 to 22.

After the transition, employees will be able to go online and select their own PIN number once certain questions are answered, which will confirm their identity.

Mandatory 401k information meetings will be held September 9. There will be no make up sessions. Anyone who misses the meetings can get the information from a designated person in their department.

The meetings will be held in the Annex conference room at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and at the

Commissioner Chamber at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m.

the Birthday list for September

1 Felisa Lockey (DSS); **2** Keith Hatcher (EMS) and Cathy Graham (Cooperative Extension); **5** Dr. John Slaughter (Health), George Butler (Sheriff) and Richard Taylor (Jail); **6** Anita Nelson (DSS); **10** Jeannie Freeman (DSS) and Billy Campbell (Sheriff); **11** Deborah Rogers (Health); **12** Bonnie Norton and CJ Dunn (Public Buildings); **13** Jamie Haywood (DSS); **14** Gloria Duncan (DSS) and Carlotta Rivers (Health); **15** Vicky McPherson (DSS); **16** Nancy Hughes (Tax); **17** Nathan Monroe (Health); **18** Susan Butler (Administration); **20** Angela Moore (Health); **22** Jane Callahan (Register of Deeds); **25** Winnie Lail (Health); **26** Joseph Blalock (Sheriff); **27** Shirley Grooms (Health), Jody Smith (Cooperative Extension) and Timothy Hunt (EMS); **28** Doris Smart (Inspections) and Beckie Kimbrell (DSS); **29** Lynda McMillan (Health).

Introductions & transitions

Welcome employees who joined County departments since June 16: **Kevin Strickland**, part-time in EMS and **Deborah Treadway**, DSS. In Public Works, **James Bullard** transitions from part-time to full-time. In Transportation, **Debbi McRae** transitions from part-time to full-time.

1,000-bed prison dedicated | Voluntary Shared Leave requested

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Repeatedly during the dedication ceremony Plyler was praised for his work on the project by Senator William R. Purcell and State Representatives Doug Yongue and Donald Bonner.

"If you're for the same thing as Senator Plyler, you would jump on the band wagon," said Bonner. "If you were against something he was for, just get out of the way so you don't get run over."

Keynote Speaker Theodis Beck, Secretary, Department of Correction, said, "This facility brings jobs and not just bricks and mortar."

"We will strive to be good neighbors in the community, and we would like to thank everyone who made this facility a reality," said Beck. "This is a shining example of a public/private relationship."

Tours were conducted immediately following the ribbon-cutting and dedication. An open house and planned tours conducted the Saturday and Sunday following the August 22 dedication attracted thousands of visitors from the community.

Key features of the Institution

The facility:

864 beds, 128 segregation cells, 8 health care beds

147 acres on McGirts Bridge Road near Wagram

410,000 square feet contains administrative offices, warehousing and maintenance, food preparation and dining hall, academic, vocational and religious program areas, medical and mental health treatment, and visitation

Vocational programs include plumbing, welding, electrical wiring

Inmate jobs include janitorial, food service, maintenance, groundskeeping

Economic Picture:

401 employees

\$12 million in salaries

\$18 million annual operating budget

Correctional Administrator:

Don Wood

Gene Jackson, Public Buildings, has signed a release form to make himself eligible for Voluntary Shared Leave. Jackson is out of work due to surgery.

Leave must be donated on a one-to-one personal basis, according to personnel policy. A leave bank for use by unnamed employees is prohibited. A non-family member donor may contribute vacation time only. A family member who also is a County employee may contribute annual or sick leave to another immediate family member employed by the County.

Voluntary Shared Leave is usually sought after the employee has exhausted all other earned leave. The intent of the Voluntary Shared Leave Policy is to allow one employee to assist another in a case of a prolonged medical condition.

Anyone who wishes to donate leave, may complete and turn in a donor form as soon as possible. Forms are available in the office of Personnel Administrator Susan Butler.

Tastebuds dazzled

by *Melissa C. Hopkins*
Cooperative Extension

The Cooperative Extension kitchen looked like a bakery August 14 with its selection of cookies, cakes, pies and

breads covering the tables.

Judges Judy Riggins, Kathy Lockey and Ann Kurtzman had the daunting task of deciding winners in each category for the 2003 Scotland County 4-H Back To School Bake-Off.

"Our judges had the opportunity to sample each entry and give it a score based on the recipe, taste, texture and presentation," said Sharon English, Extension 4-H Agent. "It was a difficult decision in each category because the 4-H youth put so much time and effort into their entries and came up with such tasty results."

First place winners included Tequisa McPhatter, Senior Division Cakes; Tequan McPhatter, Senior Division Cookies and Pies; Jenna Knight, Senior Division Breads; Brittany Garcia, Junior 11-13 Cakes; Kristen Covington, Junior 11-13 Cookies; Brandon Edge, Junior 11-13 Pies and Breads; Courtney Thompson, Junior 9-10 Cakes; Mary Lauren Tardif, Junior 9-10 Cookies; and Trenton Alford, 9-10 Pies.

Earning second place honors were Celeeta Kelly, Senior Cakes and Pies; Tequisa McPhatter, Senior Cookies; Irene Davidson, Junior 11-13 Cookies; Jessica Bowen, Junior 9-10 Cakes; and Courtney Thompson, Junior 9-10 Cookies.

Third place honors were given to Quendolyn McFayden, Senior Cakes and Trenton Alford, Junior 9-10 Cookies.



Judges Judy Riggins, left, and Kathy Lockey rate the baked goods.

At your surface



Workers resurface the Atkinson Street tennis courts. The Tennis Association, fundraisers and court fees paid for the resurfacing.

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.