

Scotland County Monthly



JULY 2006

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Arvin Meritor plans expansion

An incentive agreement for Arvin Meritor estimated at more than \$400,000 over the next six years was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Arvin Meritor, for its part, will make a \$3 million capital investment in facility expansion and create an additional 130 new jobs. The company currently employs 98 people.

Chamber of Commerce President Jim Frank Henderson told the Commissioners he supported the incentive agreement explaining that retention and expansion of existing industry is the lifeblood of the community.

Arvin Meritor is a manufacturer of commercial vehicle parts.

Community gets hurricane update

"I hope I don't see any of you again until the same time next year."

That closing statement, issued by EMS Director Roylin Hammond, offended none of the 60 Emergency Operations Center (EOC) personnel who gathered for the annual hurricane meeting.

"In 2005 Scotland County and most of North Carolina was spared from landfall," Hammond said. "Hurricanes Fran and Floyd had the last significant affect, so we're a little bit overdue."

As of May 31, 17 named storms are predicted for the Atlantic Basin including Beryl, which already passed. Nine of the 15 are predicted to become hurricanes, five of which will be intense hurricanes.

There is a 69 percent chance of a major hurricane landfall — category 3-4-5 — on the East Coast, including Peninsula Florida. The average for last century was 31 percent.

Hammond said if the EOC is activated it would have opportunity to work on a wireless system, which was not in place the previous year.

Hammond added that special needs sheltering remains a challenge. "The State is looking at extended care facilities at specific locations, such as community colleges."

"Before Katrina and Rita a 72-hour preparedness plan was emphasized," said Hammond. "Now the mindset is 120 hours because of flooding situations and inaccessibility."

Commenting on the need for preparedness in the event of a category 3 storm along the North Carolina coast, Hammond added, "Scotland County is not included as a host county, but in the event of landfall we would have a lot of people coming our way."

Fair promotes employee health

It's a win-win for employees who attend the end-of-the-month Health Fair.

Not only will employees get blood sugar, trygliceride, cholesterol and bone density (for women) results immediately, they also will be rewarded for participating in the screenings through door prizes and giveaways.

The gifts — incentives to improve attendance — are made available through a premium rebate from FirstCarolinaCare (FCC). The employee health plan provider realized more funds than anticipated and refunded part of the profits back to its customers.

The Health Fair will be held August 23 and 30 in the Education Room of the Health Department and August 25 in the Annex conference room. The Fair will begin at 7:30 a.m. on all three days.

Appointments are required and can be made by contacting Susan Butler at 277-2403. "Appointments are necessary to eliminate long waits and make it as convenient as possible for employees," Butler explained.

Butler said a 12-hour fast is required for those who plan to have their cholesterol checked. She said those who fast can still take prescription medicines and drink water or black coffee.

County receives award

Scotland County received the 2006 Employer Award from the Employment Security Commission of North Carolina.

The Laurinburg local office of the Employment Security Commission nominated the County for the Southeast Region based on its positive contributions to the State economy and its partnership with the ESC.



Administrative Assistant Lynn Poe, left, and Personnel Director Susan Butler accepted the award on behalf of the County.

WestPoint Stevens plant closes

WestPoint Stevens announced the September 8 closure of its Scotland Plant in Wagram, which will affect 370 employees.

The nearby Bob Stevens Plant will remain open. It employs approximately 800 individuals.

The weaving operation at the Scotland Plant will be relocated to a WestPoint Stevens facility in Alabama.

The textile maker, whose bed linens, towels and other products are sold under such brand names as Martex and Utica, announced last year it would source production in other countries and would also move some production to other plants in the United States.

WestPoint filed for Chapter 11 protection from creditors in June 2003.

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Landfill options reviewed

The Board of Commissioners opened the door to the possibility for a private waste company to construct a landfill in Scotland County.

In a 5 to 2 vote, the Commissioners agreed to resume contractual discussions with private companies.

The governing board also exercised a one-year purchase option on a 2,000-acre parcel of land in the northwset corner of the County owned by Jordan Timber Company.

Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioner Clarence McPhatter voted against both motions.

In split decisions, the governing boards of Wagram, Laurinburg and East Laurinburg voted to support the Commissioners in whatever decision they made regarding a landfill in the County, whether it was a public or private one.

The Town of Gibson, also in a split decision, chose not to support the Commissioners.

Controversy over whether to site a regional landfill in the County erupted last October when the Commissioners approved a franchise ordinance for County solid waste disposal services on first reading.

The ordinance, approved on second reading in November, provided the governing board with an opportunity to study longterm solid waste disposal.

The issue sparked debate countywide among citizens who opposed siting a large, private landfill operation in the County and those who supported it.

Opponents expressed concern about the environmental impact a regional landfill might create now and in the future.

Proponents said a privately-run landfill would ensure a longterm revenue stream and might attract future economic development.

Get a fresh start in Excel

by **Kevin Patterson,**
Finance Officer/Assistant County Manager

So you're looking through your Excel workbook and realize there are way too many different formats.

There are different fonts, font sizes and things like bold and underline effects everywhere. Nothing appears to be consistent with anything else.

There is a simple way to start over without manually removing it all or building the worksheet again from scratch. This method will strip your data of all its formatting for a fresh start.

First, **select the cells** where you would like to remove the formatting. You could select a range of cells, an entire worksheet or several worksheets in the workbook. (To get this to work on several worksheets, you'll have to select both the cells and the sheet tabs for all worksheets to be reformatted).

Once the cells have been selected, go to the **Edit** menu, **Clear** submenu, **Formats** choice. All formatting is instantly stripped from the data (back to the default formatting), leaving you with a "clean" sheet where you can start all over again!

DSS portrays images of freedom

by **Joe Knott, DSS**

Clients and staff learned what freedom really means during the "Fourth of July" decorating contest held at the Department of Social Services and sponsored by the agency's "A" Team.

Each unit either decorated their door, window or bulletin board for the contest. While preparing their respective areas with red, white and blue, several used pictures of family members who served in the military, others used information that supported the reason we are a free nation and what it has taken to get where we are today.

Jerry Weinreis, a local veteran and member of American Legion Post 50 of Laurinburg, judged each entry. As a judge, Weinreis said making a selection was difficult, and he had to review each door a second time before making his final decision.

Weinreis said, "I was amazed at the creative ability and patriotism shown by the staff at DSS." Congratulations to the Adult Services staff, winners of the contest who will enjoy a free lunch, compliments of the "A" Team.



Judging was a challenge for Jerry Weinreis.

SCOTLAND COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Youth football, cheerleading and soccer registrations, which began July 31, will continue through August 12.

The fee per participant is \$10 for football/cheerleading ages 7 to 12 and soccer ages 4 to 13.

Registration locations and times are as follows:

Scotland Place, Turnpike Road: Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, August 12, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Laurel Hill Community Center: Tuesday, August 8, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Gibson Gym: Wednesday, August 9, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Wagram Murray Park: Thursday, August 10, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

New participants must bring birth certificates.

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since May 16, 2006:

Mary Gentry, EMS; Celeste Rose, Social Services; and temporary workers at the Splash Pad, **Anne McRae, Bridgitte Christian, Charles Thompson, Jennetta Rainer, Jessica Grooms, Lori Reynolds** and **Persephone Stewart.**

Linda Holland transitions from accounting technician at the Health Department to Payroll Technician in Administration.

Meet new directors



Blondell Parker,
Board of Elections

Amy Richburg,
Soil and Water Conservation

Message from the Manager

My one year anniversary is August 1. Hard to believe, but time is flying by. With this date fast approaching it is time to create new goals for year two.

Here they are:

1. Maintain or lower the current property tax rate.
2. Encourage and lead the County, City of Laurinburg, Town of Wagram, Town of Gibson, Chamber of Commerce, the Tourism Development Authority and any other stakeholder in the community towards a unified strategic plan for business/economic growth in Scotland County.



John A. Crumpton

3. Establish a formal review system for County employees.
4. Use new technology to create operational efficiencies and improve customer service delivery to our citizens.

There are items within those four goals that must be achieved in order for the goals to be met.

For instance, my relationships with outside agencies must continue to grow so that all stakeholders in the community will come together to turn the industrial and economic fortunes of the County.

In Goal 1, all County Departments must work daily to identify operational efficiencies and new revenue streams so expenses decrease and revenues increase.

In Goals 3 and 4, our employees must be willing to embrace change and try to do things differently in the way we do business. We must challenge employees to find ways to continuously improve both individually and collectively.

The bottom line is I rely on the help of the community and the employees in order to achieve these goals.

In my first year here I have found Scotland County to be a great place to live and work. My family enjoys the schools, the people, the friends we have made and the overall quality of life.

Scotland County has a great foundation in place, one which we can build on to make this an even better place to live and work.

Everyone can contribute to the County's growth and prosperity. I ask each of you to challenge yourself to make things better for everyone on a daily basis.

It's been a great first year working with each of you. I look forward to an even better year ahead.

Post Scripts

EMS staff celebrating employment anniversaries are **Cory Baldwin**, 22 years; **Deanna Carlyle**, 19 years; **Tommy Hatcher**, 15 years; and **Robert Sampson**, 12 years. **Mary Gentry** was EMS Employee

of the month for May, sponsored by Mac Tucker. Congratulations to Gentry, who received certification as an EMT-Paramedic from the NC Office of EMS. In June, **Gracie Rettig** was named EMS Employee of the Month, sponsored by Mac Tucker. Congratulations to Amber and Justin Baldwin, children of **Cory Baldwin**, who competed in a pantomime skit at National Teen Talent for the IPHC (Pentecostal Holiness Church) in Daytona, FL. Justin competed in and took first place in the instrumental solo and is listed as the Teen Talent winner in Instrumental Solo. 🎉 Congratulations to **Kitty Johnson**, Health Department, on the July 18 birth of grandson, Sladen Gage Cheek. 🎉 **Dixie Whelpley**, Revaluation, extends her gratitude to **Larry Locklear** and the **maintenance staff** for rescuing her not once, but twice, when her vehicle broke down on an unpaved country road. Dixie added that Larry also brought water to her figuring she would need it after being stranded in 100 degree weather. 🎉 A **Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held 12:30 to 5 p.m. August 31 in the Annex conference room. Call **Susan Butler**, 277-2403, to make an appointment. 🎉 Best wishes to **Tim Reynolds**, Public Buildings, on his retirement.

Best wishes to retirees

July was a record month for retirements as staff bid farewell and best wishes to four friends and coworkers whose combined experience totaled more than a half century of employment with the County.



Judy Riggins
18 years with the
Board of Elections



Bunny Anderson, 11
years with the Soil
and Water
Conservation
District



Jeanie Whitehead,
12 years with the
Register of Deeds



Delores Baxley
15 years, including
11 with Parks and
Recreation

EMStatistics

2,237 total calls to 911

EMS Report for June:

Responded to 409

Medical/Trauma calls
Treated 49 motor vehicle accident patients

Administered 104 wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 19 blue address signs

911 Report

Highlights:

383 EMS
315 Sheriff's Department
200 Laurinburg Police Department
50 Fire Department

689 hang-up calls
119 wrong numbers
67 open line calls
1,268 cellular calls

Top five complaints for EMS Response

52 sick persons (specific diagnosis)
49 traffic accidents
42 breathing problems
38 chest pain
37 transfer/interfacility/palliative care

Weather

Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 96 on 6/21

Temp (low) 58 on 6/5

Wind (mph) 24 on 6/12

Rainfall (inches) 1.83 on 6/25

*Compiled by
Tommy Hatcher*

Plants identified along part of Bridge Creek Trail

Fifty signs identifying plants along Bridge Creek Trail have been posted for citizens to learn and enjoy. The plant identification project is on the first 1,000 feet of trail located just behind the land County Humane Society.



Bunny Anderson, left, and David Morrison, inspect the Virginia creeper, which looks a lot like poison ivy.

The full length of one and one-half mile trail runs in a loop on 102 acres of land surrounding the new Scotland County Recreation Complex on West Boulevard.

The plant identification program was made possible through a grant from the North Carolina Soil and Water Foundation. The Conservation District obtained permission from the County to install plastic signs identifying the 50 plants along the upland trail as well as the wetlands.

McDonald Brothers, Inc. of Laurinburg co-sponsored the project. The Pee Dee Rural Conservation and Development Council produced the plastic, weather-proof tree identification signs, and resident Thomas McKinnon constructed the display and installed the signs.

McKinnon, Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton, Agricultural Extension Agent David Morrison, resident Henry McLeod and Soil and Water Conservation District Agent Bunny Anderson planned the trail and identified the plants.

The area has been used on numerous occasions by the Scotland Soil and Water Conservation District for youth field trips as well as Envirothon team training.

Anderson hopes more signs will be installed in the future and encourages groups to use the area as an outdoor classroom and enjoy the beauty in nature.

Among the plants identified are poison ivy and its non-poisonous look alike Virginia creeper, American beauty berry, sassafras, pipissewa, horse sugar, titi, sweet pepperbush and many varieties of pine, oak and fern.

the Birthday list for August

1 Cordella Walker (Health) and Willie Hunt (Public Works); **2** Jennie Lowe (DSS); **3** Katie Joye (Health); **4** Ed Cushman (Health) and Hazel McPhatter (Cooperative Extension); **5** Michael McQueen (EMS) and Gene Jackson (Public Buildings); **7** Richard Ammons (Sheriff); **8** J.R. Horne (Public Works) and Emily Williams (DSS); **9** Lucile Bridgeman and Deloris McNeil (Health); **11** Abby Massey (Health); **12** James McQueen (Public Buildings) and Jason Byrd (Sheriff); **14** Kevin Strickland (EMS) and Joan Alford (DSS); **18** Nancy McPeck (Jail) and David Morrison (Cooperative Extension); **20** Mike Nobles (Jail) and Andrea McLeod and Stephanie Palmer (DSS); **22** Towana Harrington (DSS); **25** David Blalock (Sheriff) and William Leggette (Health); **27** Shastity Small (DSS); **28** Tenita Bullard (General Services) and Linda Harper (DSS); **29** Mitchell Johnson (Sheriff); **30** Robert Wray (Sheriff), Kimberly McRae (DSS) and Bridgette Christian (Splash Pad).

County alerted to rabies cases

The County and the City stepped up efforts to capture stray cats after two local reports of rabies in domestic animals earlier this summer — one confirmed and one unconfirmed. There have been no other local reports. Both incidents involved cats although rabies is more commonly found in bats and raccoons.

Interim Health Director Kevin Patterson said people should not leave food out for strays and should avoid unfamiliar animals, even if they are not acting aggressively. Anyone bitten or scratched by an unfamiliar animal should seek immediate medical attention and contact the local animal control.

Below are five facts about rabies ...

1. What types of animals are at risk?

In North Carolina it is most common in raccoons, skunks and foxes. It also has been found in dogs, cats, horses, cattle, bats and other animals in this state. Rabies is extremely rare in small rodents, opossums, rabbits and hares.

2. What signs does a rabid animal exhibit?

Rabid animals may exhibit a change in temperament. They may lose their fear of people. They may be easily agitated, biting with little or no provocation. They may stumble and fall. They may lose their appetite and refuse to eat foods they normally enjoy. Rabid animals may display unfocused aggression. They may attack or eat inanimate objects. A rabid animal may vocalize repeatedly sounding unusual.

3. What can be done to prevent the disease in our animals?

The best method to prevent rabies is to keep the animal to be protected away from any rabid animal. Because that is rarely possible, vaccination provides very good protection against rabies.

4. How can rabies in people be prevented?

Vaccination of our pets is a very important aspect of prevention of rabies in people. Our dogs and cats are far more likely than we are to come into contact with wildlife and be exposed to the rabies virus. Don't pet strange animals or wildlife and avoid animals that are acting strangely.

5. What are post-exposure rabies vaccinations like?

Rabies treatment is far less painful than it used to be. Most people need five rabies vaccinations in the arm spaced out over a 28-day period in addition to a one-time dose of rabies immune globulin.

Riggins recognized



Judy Riggins, who served for 18 years as Board of Elections Director, was honored by the Commissioners. Chairman J.D. Willis presented Riggins with a plaque praising her for "invaluable commitment, dedication and loyalty to all citizens."

Riggins, in turn, thanked the citizens and the Board of Elections for their support and for making her job enjoyable and fulfilling. She retired July 15.