

Scotland County

Monthly



JUNE 2009

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Commissioners hold the line on FY 2009-2010 tax rate at \$1.02

In a five to two decision, the Board of Commissioners approved a FY 2009-2010 budget that holds the tax rate at \$1.02 per \$100 assessed property value.

Commissioners J.D. Willis, Betty Blue Gholston, John Alford, Joyce McDow and Clarence McPhatter approved the budget. Commissioners Bob Davis and Guy McCook voted against it.

There is no cost of living for employees but the Commissioners did approve 24 hours of vacation leave. Most employees will be expected to take the leave during the Christmas holiday while essential personnel will coordinate leave time with their supervisors.

Commissioners Davis and McCook wanted to lower the tax rate to 99 cents. Commissioner McCook said that a lower tax rate would mean a great deal to property owners, especially those who might be unemployed or facing foreclosure. He explained that every dollar counts in difficult economic times.

see Budget, page 2

4-H provides children with summer program activities



Scotland County 4-H held three days of Summer Fun sewing workshops for youth ages 5 to 8 and 9 to 19. The 20 youth who participated learned how to make pillows, bean bags, decorative beach towels, bags, shorts and pajama pants. Eighteen more Summer Fun activities will be held through July and August with topics ranging from plant cells, cooking and gardening, to electricity and magic. In the photo, Corrie Haskins, 4-H Agent, teaches Sydney Freeman, daughter of Extension Secretary Annie Freeman, how to sew, while Sophie Pinkston, Chancellor Byrd and Thomas Spencer look on.

Employees benefit from new health care provider CIGNA

Employees will have a new health insurance provider effective July 1. CIGNA, offered through the National Association of County Commissioners (NACC), replaces FirstCarolinaCare.

Economics was the main reason for the County's switch to CIGNA. The provider offered a plan that would save the County \$175,000 from the previous carrier's proposal.

Human Resources Manager Susan Butler said, "The coverage is almost the same, but some things have been tweaked to the advantage of employees with the 100 percent wellness benefits."

Butler said that CIGNA brings employees into a larger, statewide and nationwide network.

"This is a benefit to employees in particular who have children attending school away from home," Butler explained.

Employees who choose health insurance coverage for a spouse, children or family will see a slight decrease in their monthly rate.

Butler said the big change is employee/one child, which had not been offered before and represents an estimated \$75 savings per month for the employee. Previously, an employee with one child paid the same rate as an employee with more than one child.

Copays remain the same for medical office visits at \$30 for primary care and \$40 for specialists. Wellness exams are covered at 100 percent with no copay.

Prescription costs also remain the same with a \$20 generic copay, \$35 preferred brand copay and \$50 brand copay.

Three-month prescription supplies are available through mail order only with CareMark at \$20 for generic, \$70 for preferred brand and \$100 for brand.

Once a year, employees are eligible for a \$30 deductible for eye exams with all three optometrists in the County participating.

COUNTY HEALTH PLAN
Covering the counties that cover our state.

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**www.mycigna.com or
1-866-622-2288**

my CIGNA

FY 09-10 budget reflects conservative projections

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Commissioner Davis offered a counter proposal that would trim \$419,861 from the budget and lower the tax rate to under \$1.00. He said as a Commissioner elected by the citizens, he felt a responsibility to provide some tax relief to them.

County Manager Kevin Patterson said the \$28 million-plus budget is \$3 million less than the FY 2008-2009 budget.

Patterson attributed the \$3 million budget decrease to departments tightening their belts, to the Board of Education's recent decision not to accept more than \$340,000 in additional money based on the school funding formula, Medicaid savings and to one-time stimulus funds for social services

Commissioners who opposed further cuts to lower the tax rate said they were concerned about not-yet-known State actions to balance its budget — actions that might cost counties more to fund operations.

Chairman Willis said he didn't want to lower the tax rate this year only to cut services next year or to increase the tax rate.

Commissioner McDow said she was concerned that stimulus monies to counties this year would no longer be available next year.

Patterson said he was aware of the wish by Commissioners to lower the tax rate but could not in good conscience recommend that this year.

He added, "Every line item was reduced where possible keeping in mind that departments must be able to function and provide the services necessary to the community."

Patterson added that revenues are projected conservatively again for FY 2009-2010.

Travel policy revised

The Board of Commissioners approved revisions to the Employee Travel Policy that imposes some restrictions designed to save the County money. The approved revisions will become permanent policy.

All overnight travel must be approved by the County Manager.

Meals will not be reimbursed if travel is limited to the work day. Meals will be reimbursed only if travel is overnight.

Advances for travel expenses may be received for approved travel outside the County only.

According to the revised policy, the County Manager has the authority to place further restrictions on the County limits for meal reimbursement by means of issuing Administrative Technical Bulletins.

County Manager Kevin Patterson said the revisions could save the County about \$11,000.

Employees are expected to use County vehicles whenever possible since that would be a cost saving measure, too.

Parks and Recreation fulfills No Child Left Inside quest

Text and photo by Shannon Newton, Parks and Recreation

Scotland County Parks and Recreation Summer Adventure Camp is well underway with more than 30 youth participating in the five-week camp.

Animal Camouflage, What's Wild, Fishing Fun, Birds and Amphibians and Reptiles are the weekly themes.

Educational adventure activities include field trips, hands-on demonstrations and fun, of course!

Parks and Recreation will offer the camp again next year. So make plans now to join in our quest for No Child Left Inside.

For more information about Parks and Recreation, call 277-2585, or visit www.scotlandcountyparksandrecreation.org



Summer Adventure Camp keeps more than 30 youth active.

SCOTLAND COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

Football, Cheerleading and Soccer registration will begin July 27 and end August 7. Registrations will be taken at Scotland Place on Turnpike Road Monday through Friday, Gibson Gym in Gibson, August 4 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Laurel Hill Community Center, August 5 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Wagram's Murray Park, August 6 from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Registration fee is \$12 per child.

Children must be between the ages of 7 and 12 by August 1, 2009. If this is the first year of participation for your child, a copy of the child's birth certificate is required.

Please mark your calendars for the following special dates: September 12 is Extravaganza/Picture Day. The season begins September 14. Cotton Bowl will be held October 20.

New this year is on-line registration at the Parks and Recreation webpage www.scotlandcountyparksandrecreation.org. On-line registration will be available July 27.

the Birthday list for July

2 Karen Leviner (DSS); **3** Shelia Jackson (Tax); **4** Tim Martin (Administration); **6** Paula Gill (EMS); **7** J.D. Willis (Commissioner); **8** Morris Currie (Public Buildings); **9** Amanda Martin (DSS); **10** Denise Locklear (DSS); **11** Heather Moody (DSS); **12** Preston Jackson (Sheriff); **15** Arline Swett (EMS); **16** Susan Grier (DSS); **17** Joshua Hayes (EMS); **18** Kimberly McLamb (Health); **19** Billy Bostick and Josephine Thompson (Public Buildings), Tina Ellis (Health), Christopher Lee (EMS), and Ashley Gibson (DSS); **21** Brandon Butler (EMS); **25** Mildred Williams (Veterans Service); **26** Amy Richburg (Soil and Water), Jeffrey Wood (DSS), Tina Strickland (Jail), and Tyquane White (Sheriff); **28** Vincent Locklear (Public Works); **29** Kevin Patterson (Administration), Miriam Bounds (Health), and Tara Crowley (DSS); **30** Wanda Britt (Transportation); **31** Jan-Marie Mathews (DSS) and Judith McMillan (Health).

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since April 16, 2009: **Ashley Gibson, Persephone Stewart** and **Tara Crowley, DSS.**

Congratulations Class of 2009

High School:

Cooperative Extension: **Kevin Norton**, nephew of Sharon English, Scotland High School. Kevin will attend Lenoir Community College, Kinston, in the fall.

DSS: **Hilary Gray Griffin**, daughter of Rebecca Griffin, Marlboro County High School, Bennettsville, SC. Hilary will attend Charleston Southern University in the fall. **Jose Antonio Villanueva**, son of Kimberly Villanueva, Scotland High School. Jose will attend the School of Pharmacy at UNC-Chapel Hill in the fall. **Alexis Cierra McNeil**, daughter of Sandra McNeil, Scotland High School. Alexis will attend NC Central University in the fall. **Charlene Alexandra Fields**, daughter of Dorothy Fields, Scotland High School. Charlene will attend NC A&T to pursue a degree in nursing.

Health: **Kassandra L. Odom**, daughter of Tammy M. Odom, Scotland High School. Kassandra will attend Wingate University for Pre-Pharmacy in the fall.

Inspections: **Jessica Lynn Milligan**, daughter of Thomas Milligan, Scotland High School. Jessica will major in Biology at Gardner-Webb University.

Parks and Recreation: **John Newton**, son of Shannon Newton, Scotland High School.

Transportation: **Michael Darrell Turner, Jr.**, grandson of Gracie Rettig, Scotland High School. Michael will study Pre-med at UNC Charlotte. He plans to become an anesthesiologist.

College/University:

Cooperative Extension: **Amy Morrison**, daughter of David Morrison, Appalachian State University with a degree in Business Administration.

DSS: **Alisha Ashley Kellogg**, daughter of Tammy Kellogg, Bachelor of Science in Health Promotions from UNC-Pembroke. Alisha plans to teach health and science at the high school level and eventually pursue a Master's in the field. **Robby Skamperle**, son of Sandy Skamperle and Dan Skamperle (retired, Sheriff's Department), Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from UNC-Wilmington. Robby plans to pursue a career in law enforcement. **Erica Denise Fields**, daughter of Dorothy Fields, *summa cum laude*, Keller Graduate School of Management with a Master's in Finance and Accounting. Erica currently is employed as an auditor at the Naval Audit Service in Washington, D.C. **HM03 Donna L Johnson**, daughter of Sarah McQueen, the Naval School of Health and Science, Portsmouth, VA, with an Associate Degree in Pharmaceutical Technology. HMO3 Johnson completed a two-year program in six months. She has been in the Navy for five years.

Health: **Kimberly J. Cheek**, daughter of Kitty Johnson, Master's in Reading Education from UNC-Pembroke. Kimberly is the Deaf Educator for the Office of Disability Support

Services at UNC-P and teaches sign language I, II and III for the School of Education and serves as Educational Interpreter for UNC-P. **Hal M. Hunt Jr.**, son of Tina Clark, Master's Physician Assistant Program at Wake Forest University. Hal will work at Scotland Memorial Hospital Urgent Care Center.

Laquanda Leaven, daughter of Frances Moody, *magna cum laude* from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering/Industrial and Operations Engineering. Laquanda will pursue her Master's and Ph.D. in Industrial and Systems Engineering at NC A&T State University, Greensboro.

Transportation: **Shane McNeill**, son of Gracie Rettig, Richmond Community College with an Associate Degree in Mechanical Engineering. Shane is the Engineering Manager at Thermal Metal Treating and Longleaf Collections in Aberdeen.

Staff:

Administration: **Charles Nichols**, Master's of Business Administration, UNC-Pembroke.

DSS: **Tisha Moody**, Associate in Arts, Fayetteville Technical Community College.

Post Scripts

Congratulations to **Dixie Whelpley**, Tax, who accepted membership in The National Society of Collegiate Scholars. Membership is by invitation only, based on grade point average and class standing. ☘ **Maggie Pate**, daughter of **Marty Pate**, Tax, received an Academic Achievement Award from Carver Middle School. ☘ **Jordan Scott**, son of **Leslie Scott**, DSS, will make the leap from Spring Hill Middle School directly to Richmond Community College as part of the Scotland Early College Program. ☘ **Stella Mia Hardin**, daughter of **Danielle Wilkins**, Health, graduated from Riverwood Pre-Elementary Pre-K Class with the Best All Around Student award. ☘ **Adam Holland**, son of **Linda Holland**, Administration, made Dean's List for the Spring 2009 semester at UNC-Pembroke. He is majoring in Exercise and Sports Science. ☘ **Imani McPhatter**, daughter of **Shakesha McPhatter**, DSS, was inducted into the Beat Club at Sycamore Lane Middle School where she attained high scores in end of grade reading and math tests. ☘ Congratulations to **Judy O'Brien**, Health, first-time grandmom to Fisher Mills O'Brien, born June 23.

Our condolences to **Lisa Harper**, DSS, on the death of her father.

On April 1, 2010
we all count!



Order of Long Leaf Pine awarded

Representative Garland Pierce presented the Order of the Long Leaf Pine to Leora Davis, who retired from Scotland Memorial Library after 32 years of service.



Prior to working at the Library, Davis, 88, worked at St. Andrews Presbyterian College and also operated her own business.

More than 100 people attended a farewell reception for Davis at the Library June 20.

The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is among the most prestigious awards presented by the Governor of North Carolina. The Order of the Long Leaf Pine is presented to individuals who have a proven record of

extraordinary service to the state. Contributions to their communities, extra effort in their careers, and many years of service to their organizations are some of the guidelines by which recipients are selected for this award. The honor is most often presented when a person retires.

Library staff discover rare copy of *The Raven*

While clearing out a little-used storage room at Scotland Memorial Library, staff made a discovery of large proportions and poetic in nature.

The find was an oversized copy of Edgar Allen Poe's classic poem *The Raven*. The 1884 publication measuring nearly 19 inches in length features intricately detailed steel engravings throughout.



The spine of *The Raven* before (right) and after (above) restoration.

The *Raven* wasn't without its condition issues. Its front and back covers were detached and part of one page had been cut out. The spine was missing but the fabric was intact and tightly bound.

Online research revealed that a restored copy of the book valued at \$1,400. Library Director Leon Gyles also located the name of a man in California who restored a similar book.

Gyles sent a query and photos of the Library's copy of *The Raven* to Len Muir, a book restorer. Muir's response was a positive one. Muir restored the book in six weeks and returned *The Raven* to the Library.

Gyles said at some point he might ask permission from the Board of Commissioners to sell it. Meanwhile, it will be loaned to the Cleveland County Library in October as a special feature of that library's community read called "*Ravin for Poe.*" The Cleveland County library will make the book available for viewing in a locked display.



Emergency staff tour Miss Piggy

Text and photo by
Roylin Hammond, EMS

Statewide Emergency Management Coordinators toured the Hurricane Hunter plane *Miss Piggy* at the invitation of the Raleigh Office of the National Weather Service. More than 100 emergency management community members attended the tour at Raleigh/Durham Airport.

Bill Reed, Director of the NOAA Hurricane Tracking Center in Florida, spoke to the group about his experience with hurricanes, including Katrina, Rita and Andrew.

The pilot and crew explained how they used the 33-year-old plane to fly through hurricanes and obtain data to predict what path a hurricane would follow.

The event was also attended by local TV 5 Meteorologist Greg Fishel along with Emergency Management Director Doug Howell and Under Secretary of Crime Control and Public Safety Rudy Rudisill.



The crew of *Miss Piggy* greet visitors.

County Manager goes to jail — sort of



County Manager Kevin Patterson was hauled off to 'jail' last week — jail being the Wachovia Building in downtown Laurinburg.

While there Patterson and other detainees were treated to bagels and coffee as they waited for someone to bail them out.

Putting people in jail was actually a fundraising event where bail money was earmarked for support of Scotland Enterprises, a job training program for people with special needs.

Other notables jailed were Sheriff Shep Jones, EMS Director Roylin Hammond and Health Director Ron Sapp. APBs were posted for Commissioners J.D. Willis and Clarence McPhatter. At press time, there was no word as to whether the two were apprehended.

Assistant Jail Administrator Ricky Taylor escorted Patterson out of the government building at 507 West Covington Street. Since Patterson cooperated with Taylor and put up no resistance, he was treated with leniency and permitted to ride shotgun in Taylor's unmarked vehicle.

Schools awarded for litter prevention

Carver Middle School received overall award in the Clean School Jam competition. Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce Community Image Committee, the competition recognizes four schools that excel in litter prevention, recycling and beautification.

I. E. Johnson Elementary won for its beautification projects, Laurel Hill Primary won for recycling awareness and North Laurinburg Elementary won for its litter prevention program. Schools were evaluated based on the work and organization they put into improving their campuses through litter prevention, beautification and recycling. Solid Waste Enforcement Officer J.R. Horne is a member of the Chamber's Image Committee.