

Scotland County Monthly



MARCH 2006

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Agency looks to increase business for North Carolina companies

Too many North Carolina military contracts are awarded to out-of-state businesses. One agency hopes to reverse that trend, and its services are free.

"We need to capture the \$87 million in business spent at Fort Bragg in 2004," said Scott Dornay, executive director of the North Carolina Military Business Center (NCMBC).



Scott Dornay discusses the number of business opportunities through the procurement of military contracts.

Although \$35 million of the \$87 million was awarded to North Carolina businesses, Dornay is confident a larger share of it can benefit companies within the State.

<http://www.ncmbc.us/>
connecting business
and military

"Increasing military business for North Carolina companies is about selling the services you provide," Dornay told a room full of business people and contractors. "You can do it, and we can help. We want to tilt the playing field a little more toward us."

NCMBC goals are to increase military business for existing North Carolina companies, integrate

transitioning military personnel and family members into the workforce and support recruitment and development of defense-related businesses in North Carolina.

Its official website, matchforce.org, provides the same service by providing businesses and individuals the ability search for posted opportunities.

"The system is a dating service for federal opportunities, and you get an e-mail if there is an opportunity," Dornay explained.

The service is available only to North Carolina businesses and individuals who register with a valid North Carolina address.

Dornay said \$3 billion to \$5 billion in base construction will occur at military installations before 2011. "We want to win those contracts."

He said the recent Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) will further an economic boom by bringing 6,000 active duty members and their families to communities surrounding Fort Bragg, Scotland County included.

"With the presence of the military and the businesses we have in the State, we can expand what we do in Department of Defense procurement, which could create 30,000 jobs in the State," Dornay said. "This State can compete."

He added, "This is a perfect storm. It's a tidal wave of opportunity."

Online tax office site performing well

There were 3,885 visitors to the County's online tax site during peak season from November 2005 to January 2006.

As a result, online tax payments from 132 sources during that same three-month period totaled \$28,221.

Tax Assessor Mary Helen Norton said she expects the number of site visits to spike in August, when taxpayers can take advantage of a one percent discount for timely payment, and in December, when tax payments are made for income tax purposes.

Norton added that awareness of the Tax Office site is reaching new levels because tax bills have the web address written on them. Norton said an estimated 22,000 real estate bills are mailed as well as 20,000 motor vehicle bills.

Bill Shoaff of Sturgis Web Services, which hosts the website, said visitors are conducting multiple searches and multiple tax views.

"The largest impact to the County by having information online is so citizens and businesses can look up information themselves without having to contact the County offices during business hours," he said.

In January 2006 alone 1,747 visitors conducted multiple searches, which included 3,369 tax views and 2,895 tax searches on www.scotlandcountytaxes.com.

Health, DSS make plans for smoke-free facility

The Health Department and DSS will declare independence July 4 when the building the agencies occupy becomes smoke-free.

The agencies are following the lead of Scotland Memorial Hospital, which also will become smoke-free on Independence Day.

That means no smoking will be permitted within 50 feet of the Health Department and DSS at 1405 West Boulevard.

Health Director Jane Murray said two coliseums and eight hospitals in the State have already taken steps to do the same thing.

The action supports a State Session Law that exempts certain local departments and social services from the law governing smoking restrictions.

THERE'S MORE INSIDE
EMS lists top calls for 2005 page 4

Message from the Manager

Perception vs. Reality.

It is easy to get caught up in what we believe to be true, when in fact what we believe, isn't true.

This is called Perception. No place is perception any bigger than on one big issue in Scotland County — the tax rate.

The first perception is that since the County has a high tax rate that the County also has a high tax burden. Along with that burden is the perception that the County is not financially sound.

The truth is that the County's tax burden isn't the highest in the State, and the recent audit shows the County is financially sound.

The John Locke Foundation and the Center for Local Innovation recently published a guide called *By the Numbers: What Government Costs in North Carolina Cities and Counties*.

The guide is published annually as a tool that reflects expenditures, taxes collected and demographics of counties and cities in North Carolina.

The final outcomes are factual and not an opinion. So when we look at the rankings and see that Scotland County didn't even make the High Burden — Upper Quartile but ranked 44th behind counties such as Mecklenburg, Moore, Wake and New Hanover — why do we continue to face the issues of having the highest tax rate in the State?

A closer look at the report shows that the numbers use a per capita tax and fee burden formula as the baseline for the findings.

Based on population, citizens in Scotland County pay \$1,132 per person in support of our County. Compare this to \$2,262.54 per person in Mecklenburg.

We have to ask ourselves, "Why are we perceived as having the highest tax burden in the State?"

A copy of the Guide is in my office. I encourage each of you to review it.

Any time you have a negative perception about your community, you must attempt to see if it is indeed true.

In our case we have a perceived negative, but to sell our community you have to take this negative and turn it into a positive.

First, as a burden our tax rate ranks 44th in the State, not number one.

Second, the County has done what it needed to do to keep the County financially sound.

Lastly, the community has made a commitment to fund our schools at a level that allows our children the opportunity to compete with children in counties much larger than ours.

Don't get caught in the negative perception of our County. Find the truth and sell your County to others.



John A. Crumpton

Landfill debate continues

Three weeks after the Commissioners agreed to end negotiations with Waste Management and Republic, the landfill issue has become a topic of debate among citizen opponents and proponents.

A solid waste committee made up of six people who support the development of a regional landfill and six people who are against it was formed after landfill proponents asked the Commissioners to reconsider their decision.

Committee discussions will be facilitated by Commissioner John Alford with technical and information assistance provided by County Manager John Crumpton and County Engineer Jim Blackwell.

The two groups will study solid waste issues over the next month and provide the Commissioners with recommendations on a local solid waste plan.

Rare elections poll tax book donated to State archives

The State Department of Cultural Resources will receive a rare Scotland County Poll Tax Book, which will be included in an upcoming exhibit on Black History and Civil Rights.

The book spans the years 1902 to 1914 when citizens had to pay a poll tax in order to vote, and the Sheriff had to attest in writing to the fact that the tax had indeed been paid.

"Other counties will be participating (in the exhibit), but nobody has anything like this," said Elections Director Judy Riggins. "They were probably destroyed."

The book is divided into columns with separate listings for black, white and American Indian voters.

"Women couldn't vote then so there are no women in the book, only men," said Riggins. "Today we have more women registered to vote than we have men, and more women turn out to vote."

Riggins said of the book, which has become brittle over time, that the State will preserve it and put it on display so a greater number of people would be able to view it.

A 600-pound Automatic Voting Machine (AVM) also will be donated to the State Department of Cultural Resources. Riggins said the AVM to be donated will have a presidential ballot on it.

Locally, the Scotland Historic Properties Museum will house an AVM and the County's voting history books.

All counties were required to transition to an electronic voting format and contract with a State-approved voting equipment vendor by January 1, 2006, which rendered AVMs obsolete.



Judy Riggins reviews names in the poll tax book.



Scotland is one of the few remaining counties that still used the Automatic Voting Machine.

Protect your e-mail address

Submitted by Gaylord Hunt, Computer Tech II

One of the best strategies for avoiding spam is to protect your personal e-mail address.

Your best defense is for the spammers to not even know you exist, but this is a difficult task to accomplish. Many spam mailing lists are created by harvesting e-mail addresses from websites where your information may be displayed.

Newsgroups, bulletin boards and chat rooms are just a few examples of places where spammers may run scripts to collect anything that resembles an e-mail address. Many sites, such as bulletin boards, have safeguards to protect their members, but it does nothing if these members post their personal information in one of their posts, their signature or somewhere else that puts the information in plain sight.

In addition, signing up with unknown sources for online contests, mailing lists and similar occasions where you need to provide an address as part of the registration process may also expose your address to spammers. Using your best judgment is your best defense.

If you want to keep your mailbox clean, keep your address private, only giving it out to trusted parties.

Emergency helicopter transport service is now closer to home

An Air-Ambulance stationed at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Fayetteville can be anywhere in Scotland County in approximately 12 to 15 minutes.



The ability to transport Scotland County citizens to a regional trauma center just got faster with the addition of an Air-Ambulance stationed at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Fayetteville.

To learn more about emergency air transport Scotland County EMS, the Rescue Squad, Fire Departments and other emergency agencies attended a helicopter operations and safety class.

UNC Hospital's Air-Care crew discussed many topics including the safe and simple methods of loading a patient into the aircraft and the setting up of a landing zone.

UNC recently stationed an Air-Ambulance at Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Fayetteville. The Air-Ambulance, if not out of its home base, can be anywhere in Scotland County in approximately 12 to 15 minutes.

The closest helicopter previously was located 90 miles from Scotland County with travel time of more than 30 minutes. The Fayetteville Air-Ambulance location can now provide citizens with a faster means of travel to a regional trauma center.

"This great service will surely help to save lives and improve life quality for those citizens of Scotland County who need critical care," said EMS Shift Supervisor Dennis Currie.

News of Note

VAMC transportation now available

Veterans who need transportation assistance to the VA Medical Center may contact the DAV in Richmond County. The DAV van travels to the VAMC in Fayetteville. Veterans needing transportation assistance to go to the VAMC may contact the DAV in Richmond County. The DAV van travels to the VAMC in Fayetteville Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Veterans may call Jimmy Brigman at 910-582-4021 to make arrangements to be picked up at Pate's in Laurel Hill on those days.

Discount prescription cards offered

The County is looking into a program to distribute prescription discount cards to citizens who are underinsured, uninsured and indigent. The program is made available to member counties of NACO (National Association of Counties). The six participating pharmacies in Scotland County are Medicine Shoppe, Kerr Drug, Community Drug, Eckerd, Medical Village and Scotland Pharmacy.

Annual Free Day set for April 1

Scotland County's Annual Free Day is Saturday, April 1, 2006. Recycle Centers will be open 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Pickup trucks, trailer loads and scrap tires must go to the landfill on Patterson Road and Old Maxton Road. A load of more than five tires must be accompanied with a scrap certification sheet. Landfill Free Day hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Recycle and help save the environment

EnviroSmart boxes are being placed in County buildings and at the recycle centers as receptacles for discarded ink jet, laser cartridges and cell phones. More than 90 percent of material in mobile phones, batteries and accessories can be recovered and used to make new products. The items collected are dismantled and sorted and sent to specific recyclers who further shred, sort and process these components for recovery of plastics, metals and precious metals including nickel, cadmium, silver and gold.

Employees 'spring' into walking

The "Step Into Spring" Walking Promotion Program has inspired at least 100 employees to put their best step forward. Staff from the Annex, the Sheriff's Department, DSS and Health have signed on for the challenge. Participants receive a pedometer and a walking log. Health Educator Kathie Cox said she hopes employees collectively will reach a 10,000-mile goal by May 6. Although the goal is ambitious, she said, "I'm confident we can reach that goal." Exercise, such as aerobics, swimming and/or weight training would be equivalent to one mile per 15 minutes, depending on intensity.

EMS 2005 report trends highlighted

EMS responded to 4,473 calls in 2005, down slightly from the 4,663 EMS responses made in 2004. Breathing Problems was the number one complaint with 581 calls. In 2004, Breathing Problems was in third place with 498 calls.

Traffic Accidents (total patients) took the number one spot in 2004 with 707. It's at number three this year and down significantly to 498.

Both Chest Pain and Diabetic Problems moved up one in the 2005 ranking from their placement of five and 10, respectively, in 2004.

The lists to the right, compiled by EMS Dispatcher Tommy Hatcher, display the top 20 calls for 2005 compared to those in 2004.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond answers some questions about trends in the 2005 yearend report.

Q. Overall, the number of complaints EMS responded to this year compared to last year is down. Is there an explanation for this, or is 2005 just a better year than last year?

A. First, in 2004, the new State correctional facility in Scotland County went into operation, and we responded to calls there about twice a week. By 2005, the medical staff at the prison settled in and worked the bugs out of their medical support system. This resulted in fewer calls to EMS. Second, Scotland County experienced a reduction of more than 200 traffic accidents in which patients needed medical attention and transport to a hospital. These two areas attributed to the reduction in EMS call volume for 2005 of 4,473 from 4,653 calls in 2004.

Q. Chest pain and diabetes-related complaints were up slightly, does that coincide with a national trend?

A. Yes. As the Baby Boomer generation ages into their mid 50s and early 60s, they begin to experience more cardiac and respiratory health issues. This is happening throughout the country. Diabetes is also on the rise in the United States. The American lifestyle of observing poor nutritional habits and the lack of exercise, especially among the younger population, both contribute to the rise in diabetes we see both locally and nationwide.

Q. Is there a statistic in 2005 that you find significant, and why is that?

A. I'm not sure why the amount of traffic accidents decreased in 2005. However, we do expect to see an increase in the severity of injury and number of accidents when Highway 74 becomes an Interstate Highway in 2009. We continue to see an increase in the number of 911 calls that originate from a cellular phone. That number is at 50 percent now, and we expect that percentage to continue to increase. As technology continues to advance, we expect to see an increase in the number of Voice of Internet Provider (VoIP) 911 calls coming from personal desktop and laptop computers.

Q. In general, are there any additional comments you wish to share about the EMS yearend report?

A. The addition of a new 2005 ambulance plus the recent action by the County Commissioners to allow the addition of a 2006 ambulance, replacing 1991 and 1992 model ambulances, will greatly enhance the ability of Scotland County EMS to respond to calls with dependable, cost efficient units. This should also lower repair cost since the older, more costly units will be removed from service. Diesel fuel costs were considerably over budget this past year, and EMS expects to budget accordingly for the upcoming year to prevent another cost overrun situation. A steady increase in the EMS call volume over the next few years — relative to an aging population with increased health care needs and issues — also is expected.

Q. Do you see any trends for emergency transport emerging in 2006 and beyond?

A. We expect to see a continuing rise in the number of elderly patients we transport, not only from medical care facilities but also from their homes. This again is a product of the baby boomer generation aging into that period of their lives when health issues drive the need for increased medical care. We expect the need for non-emergency transport to continue to increase. Both Braveheart, the County's franchised non-emergency private ambulance provider, and SCATS, the County's human service transportation system, have seen a steady increase in the request for their services to transport patients to medical appointments and medical services, particularly dialysis. We expect that trend to continue for many years to come.

2005 Top 20 EMS Calls

Complaint	2005
Breathing Problems	581
Sick Person (specific diagnosis)	542
Traffic Accidents (total patients)	491
Chest Pain	435
Transfer/Interfacility/Palliative Care	398
Falls/Back Injuries (traumatic)	306
Unknown Problem (man down)	230
Unconscious/Fainting	205
Diabetic Problems	172
Convulsions/Seizures	162
Hemorrhage/Laceration	151
Abdominal Pain	105
Traumatic Injuries, Specific	93
Stroke (CVA)	87
Pregnancy/Childbirth/Miscarriage	69
Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest	65
Assault/Rape	62
Overdose/Ingestion/Poisoning	60
Heart Problems	52
Headache	40

2004 Top 20 EMS Calls

Complaint	2004
Traffic Accidents (total patients)	707
Transfer/Interfacility/Palliative Care	513
Breathing Problems	498
Sick Person (specific diagnosis)	492
Chest Pain	458
Falls/Back Injuries (traumatic)	326
Unconscious/Fainting	211
Convulsions/Seizures	202
Unknown Problem (man down)	194
Diabetic Problems	144
Hemorrhage/Laceration	143
Traumatic Injuries, Specific	124
Abdominal Pain	117
Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest	71
Assault/Rape	68
Stroke (CVA)	68
Overdose/Ingestion/Poisoning	60
Pregnancy/Childbirth/Miscarriage	49
Heart Problems	37
Back Pain (non-traumatic)	29

EMStatistics

EMS Report for February:

Responded to 419

Medical/Trauma calls

Treated 55 motor vehicle accident patients

Administered 66

wellness/blood pressure checks

Sold 13 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

379 EMS

218 Sheriff's Department

118 Laurinburg Police Department

67 Fire Department

491 hang-up calls

92 wrong numbers

51 open line calls

931 cellular calls

Top five complaints for EMS Response

55 traffic accidents

53 breathing problems

50 transfer/interfacility/palliative care

45 sick person

(specific diagnosis)

37 chest pain

Weather Observations (EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 73 on 2/17

Temp (low) 24 on 2/9, 10, 26, 27

Wind (mph) 26 on 2/5

Rainfall (inches) .85 on 2/4

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

If tornado strikes, be prepared

Tornadoes can happen any time of the year, but they typically occur in March, April and May with a secondary peak in November.

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. Weak tornadoes can pack 60 to 110 mph winds.

Most tornado-related deaths and injuries happen outdoors, in automobiles and in mobile homes.

When a tornado warning is issued for your area, or if you spot a tornado, seek shelter in a substantial building. The safest place is an interior bathroom or closet. Put as many walls between you and the outside as possible. Stay away from windows, which can easily shatter from debris picked up by a tornado.

If you are outdoors, seek shelter in a low spot like a ditch or culvert. Get as low as possible to protect yourself from flying debris, which causes nearly all injuries and deaths.

If you are in a car and threatened by a tornado, abandon it and seek shelter in a substantial structure or in a ditch. Never try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle. Tornadoes do not always travel in straight lines. It's difficult to know where one is going to go.

Also, never seek shelter from a tornado under an overpass, which puts you at more risk from violent winds and flying debris.



The National Weather Service will issue tornado watches when conditions are favorable for thunderstorms to produce tornadoes. Once a tornado is spotted or detected by radar, the National Weather Service will issue a tornado warning.

Tapping national stockpile discussed by area agencies

Developing partnerships with neighboring communities and recruiting volunteers with clinical and nonclinical backgrounds would assist the County's response effort in the event of a chemical, nuclear, explosive or environmental attack.

Those were suggestions made by NC Public Health Regional Surveillance Team officials during a worksession on accessing the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The emergency response worksession was hosted by the Health Department.

With nearly 100 community volunteers in attendance, State specialists discussed how to request the SNS, what is expected of the community and the public health agency and what is involved in coordinating mass dispensing of an antibiotic and/or vaccinations.

The SNS exists to deliver critical medical assets to the site of a national emergency. It is stored in strategic locations around the U.S. to ensure rapid delivery anywhere in the country.

"Such events require many resources," said Health Director Jane Murray. "The public is going to be looking to its local governing bodies and agencies to mitigate the situation."

She added, "Providing medication and treatment to the entire population of Scotland County will prove to be one of the largest challenges we will face."

Anyone who wishes to volunteer for the Community Response Volunteer Team should contact Tina Oxendine, 277-2440 ext. 466, for more details.



Wendy Boggs, RN, NC Public Health Regional Surveillance Team, discusses the Strategic National Stockpile.

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since December 16, 2005:

Tammy McRae, Christopher Simmons, Dustin Campbell and Jonathan Dunn, Jail; Clyde Willoughby Sheriff; Jammie Deese and Myra McGill, DSS; and Charles Osteen, Public Works; Carolyn Williams and Charles Watson, part-time in EMS and Catina Williams, temporary in EMS; and Katherine Crumpton, temporary in Register of Deeds.

H5N1 avian flu discussion topic

"Avian flu is a bird disease people caught because of their interaction with birds, not people," stressed Dr. Keith Henderson, State Public Health Regional Surveillance Team Leader.

Dr. Henderson, guest speaker at a Health Department workshop, said all flus are avian. Health officials are concerned about the H5N1 strain if it mutates or shifts. "Poultry and migratory water fowl are a big player in almost every flu until it mutates. Pigs are one of the biggest hosts of flu known to man."

He added that it is important for public health agencies to plan for everything and to not make H5N1 more than anything else that can cause crisis, like a hurricane, for instance.

Planning the right strategy can help smokers quit

A key strategy for living a longer, healthier life comes as no surprise — don't smoke. If you're a smoker, you're simply more likely to die prematurely — from heart or lung disease, for instance. Smoking can take more than 10 years off your life.

Quitting means health benefits start in just minutes, and your risk of heart disease is cut in half in as little as a year. Using more than one strategy to stop smoking might increase your chances of quitting successfully.

Consider the following options:

Plan ahead. Get in the quitting mindset before you stop for good. Your quit date might be a few days in the future, or it could be two weeks. In the days leading up to your quit date, cut back on the number of cigarettes you smoke each day.

Medication. Medication helps reduce cravings and eases the withdrawal symptoms of quitting until the worst effects are over. You have both prescription and over-the-counter options that can be discussed with your doctor.

Self-help. Publications from national health organizations such as the American Cancer Society, American Lung Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as well as your state and local public health departments can help you plan and maintain your attempt to stop smoking. Arm yourself with information that will help convince you to stay off cigarettes once you stop smoking.

Group support. Whether you meet online or at an in-person support group, seek the support of others who are trying to stop smoking. The federal government and many states offer stop smoking help online or over the phone.

Individual counseling. This includes one-on-one contact with a trusted doctor, psychologist, nurse or counselor. This gives you a forum to discuss the barriers you have to quitting and, once you stop smoking, the urges you'll have to light up again. Whomever you seek counseling from can discuss ways to deal with the challenges.

Cold turkey. This is a sudden, decisive break from cigarettes. You stop smoking completely with little or no reduction beforehand. If you quit cold turkey, you're likely to experience symptoms of withdrawal. Some withdrawal symptoms you may experience after you stop smoking include restlessness, increased appetite and irritability.

Exercise. This may help reduce the stress and weight gain that sometimes occur when you stop smoking.

Buddy system. Ask a nonsmoking friend or family member to be available for you to contact when you experience tough times or when you have a reason to celebrate.

Alternative therapies. Some smokers turn to hypnosis or acupuncture to help them stop smoking, though little proof exists that either is effective. But if it helps you quit, it might be worth it to you.

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research

Post Scripts

Personnel Administrator **Susan Butler** extends many thanks to all who supported the County-sponsored **Red Cross Blood Drive** February 28. The goal of 30 units was exceeded with 36 units collected. 🎉 We wish a speedy recovery to **Catherine Stubbs**, Tax Office. 🎉 **Pierre Lee** was named February EMS Employee of the Month, compliments of Mac Tucker. 🎉 In Health Department news:

Congratulations to **Jennifer Taylor** in Fiscal Management for being selected as the January Employee of the Month and to **Judy O'Brien** in Management Support for being selected as the February Employee of the Month. Best wishes to Lucy Walters, **Nutritionist**. We wish her well in her new position with Stanly County Health Department. Welcome to **Ed Cushman**, Environmental Health, and to **Teresa Herring** in Management Support. Congratulations to **Danny Sprouse** RS for completing a certification in Pesticide Management.

Condolences are extended to Solid Waste Enforcement Officer **J.R. "Bobby" Horne** on the death of his father.

Surveying the progress



Members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board survey the grading progress at the Recreation Complex baseball/softball fields. Viewing the fields from the spot where the concession stand will be located are, left to right, Doris Douglas, Parks and Recreation Director Shannon Newton, Advisory Board Chair Becca Hughes and Chris Wood.

the Birthday list for April

2 Glenn Chatman (Public Works); **4** Buffie Hunt (EMS); **5** Gwendolyn Pate (EMS); **10** Charlene Mouzon (DSS); **12** Betty Smith (Health) and Michael Alford (Parks and Recreation); **14** Lakeisha Patterson and Ethena Locklear (DSS) and Jimmy King (Parks and Recreation); **15** Melinda Salley (Health); **16** Erica Hall (Health); **18** April Snead (DSS); **19** Charles Osteen (Public Works) and Robert McRae (Transportation); **20** Sandra McNeil (DSS); **21** Patricia Campbell (Public Buildings); **22** Robert Britt (Sheriff) and Madeline Peele (DSS); **24** Charles Watson (EMS); **25** Sandra Miller (Jail); **27** Jan Elliott (DSS) and Tina Oxendine (Health); **28** Sandy McCrimmon (Transportation); **29** Teresa Smith (Jail).

Reminder: Budget discussions will be scheduled throughout April with Department Heads, the County Manager and the Finance Officer.

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.