

Scotland County Monthly



MAY 2006

A newsletter for Scotland County employees

Committee submits recommendations for solid waste disposal solutions

The Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) provided the Board of Commissioners with recommendations on possible solutions as to how the County might dispose of its solid waste in the future.

The recommendations followed closely the opinions of its members — six who favor a regional landfill and six who oppose it. Neither group arrived at an agreement on solid waste disposal nor did they make any concessions on the subject.

The opposition recommended the County maintain local control over its solid waste and adopt a policy to reduce the waste stream, both municipal for solid waste and construction and demolition.

Those in opposition also recommended the County extend its contract with Republic at Uwharrie Landfill at appropriate intervals over the next 12 years of its future options.

Securing land for the expansion of a C&D facility beyond the seven-year current capacity and securing additional land for a County municipal solid waste landfill also was recommended.

Opponents further recommended, “Avoid garbage becoming our standard for industry. Recognize that an eventual 300-foot mountain of trash would create a negative perception for visitors that drive by.”

Regional landfill proponents, on the other hand, recommended the County enter into an agreement with a waste disposal company because such an operation would create a continuous revenue stream and additional jobs and attract industry to the area.

Proponents recommended that 50 percent of revenue generated from a regional landfill go towards property tax relief. Proponents suggested that a regional landfill and accompanying trucking firm also would increase tax revenues.

“We feel that the safety and environmental record of the major companies that operate MSW landfills are exemplary,” stated the proponents. “Scotland County needs the economic impact of this new industry, we need jobs, revenue, cost savings, local waste solutions, tax revenue and a new vitality that it will bring to our local economy.”

The Commissioners appointed a committee to research the issue and submit recommendations after a group of citizens asked the governing board to reconsider its decision not to negotiate with solid waste disposal companies.

Ron Riggins, who favors a regional landfill, selected Landon Chavis, Bob Wagner, Greg Baines, Dr. Matthew Block and Nathan Monroe to the Committee.

Bob Davis, who opposes a regional landfill, selected Dr. Brad Bethel, James Quick, Jim McMillan, Marcus Norton and John Cooley to the Committee.

Chaired by Commissioner John Alford, the 12-member committee toured the County landfill and the New Hanover County solid waste operation and heard reports from County staff and a representative from the State Department of Natural Resources.

Officials celebrate Kordsa expansion

Local officials and Kordsa administrators credited teamwork and a willingness by the parent company to invest in Scotland County for the completion of the 232,000-square-foot expansion at the Laurel Hill plant.

Chairman J.D. Willis said, “This is a great day for Scotland County. We are happy to save the more than 170 jobs and have a \$22 million investment, which helps with our tax base. We want to continue this marriage.”

The expanded space houses Kordsa’s new twisting and weaving plant.

Kordsa is a global supplier of nylon industrial yarn, fabrics and single end cord serving the tire, mechanical rubber goods, webbing and cordage markets.

Local officials, with assistance for the State, negotiated with Kordsa to expand in Laurel Hill rather than relocate to Tennessee.



Kordsa Chief Executive Officer Mehmet Pekarun cuts the ribbon. Joining him in the celebration, left to right, are Board of Commissioners Chairman J.D. Willis, Laurinburg City Mayor Ann B. Slaughter, former Laurel Hill Plant Manager LeGette McLean, Kordsa Vice President and General Manager of North America Dincer Celik, Laurel Hill Plant Manager Daniel Pelton and Chamber of Commerce Chairman Greg Wood.

Landfill talks resume

The Board of Commissioners by a majority vote agreed to reopen talks concerning a landfill and solid waste options in the County.

Vice Chair Betty Blue Gholston and Commissioner Clarence McPhatter voted against the motion to resume discussions.

Proposals to site a regional landfill in the County created controversy among residents. The Commissioners received recommendations from citizens on both sides of the issue who served on a Solid Waste Advisory Committee.

Reopening talks provided the Commissioners an opportunity to discuss at length the future of solid waste and the options available.

Medicaid relief targeted by counties as a priority



Left to right, Rep. Doug Yongue, Commissioner Charles "Scoofer" Jordan, County Manager John Crumpton and Rep. Garland Pierce at a legislative reception.

Commissioners Leon Butler and Charles "Scoofer" Jordan were among hundreds of local elected officials who spent a day in Raleigh lobbying State legislators for Medicaid relief.

Both the Senate and House proposed bills, which would provide targeted relief to counties by capping costs, with the low-wealth counties benefiting most.

The proposed relief would utilize \$65 million in unanticipated savings in State Medicaid costs.

To date, the budget released by Governor Mike Easley does not include funding for Medicaid relief.

The State realized over-collections in revenues this year exceeding \$1 billion and unanticipated revenue growth next year of \$700 million, which counties believed would pave the way for Medicaid relief.

However, Governor Easley did not offer up any plans for county Medicaid relief. Instead, the \$65 million that was targeted by the House Select Committee on Health Care for county Medicaid relief was diverted to other gubernatorial initiatives.

North Carolina is the only State that requires counties to pay a fixed percentage of the State's Medicaid share, even though the State and federal governments make all decisions regarding eligibility, services and reimbursement rates.

Scotland County is one of 70 low wealth counties hit hardest by this mandate.

More than 33 percent of Scotland County residents are Medicaid eligible. In FY 2005-2006, 21 cents of the \$1.10 tax rate, or 9.9 percent of the budget, was earmarked for the County's mandated share of Medicaid.

Medicaid will cost Scotland County taxpayers \$3.7 million next year, which is a 65 percent increase since 2000. **(See Manager's Message for more on Medicaid relief).**

News of Note

Spring Fling at Relay Beach tickets available

Tickets are available for the annual Spring Fling at Relay Beach. Spring Fling, which benefits Relay For Life, will be held at the Highlands on Plant Road, 7 p.m. to 12 a.m., Saturday, June 17. Tickets are \$25 each and cover food and all beverages. There will be a drawing for door prizes. Dress is casual. Proceeds go to the Scotland County Area Relay For Life. Contact Lynda McMillan (Health Department) or Kaye McMillan (DSS) for tickets.

It's time to honor graduates

The June edition of the *Scotland County Monthly* will include its annual recognition of high school and college/university graduates who are children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of County staff. Please email the following information to akurtzman@scotlandcounty.org: Full name of student, name and department of employee, relationship to employee, name and location of high school, college or university, degree and major and future plans, if known.

Documentation for new employees is required

A number of documents are required on the first date of work for a new employee working full-time or on a temporary/part-time basis. Documents to be submitted to Administration by Department are the Scotland County Personnel Action Form, a copy of the PD-107 State Application for Employment, a copy of the Criminal Background Check with the release form attached, a copy of the drug test (if safety sensitive position). The following documents to be completed by the employee include the Federal Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, the NC-4 State Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, Form I-9 U.S. Department of Justice Employment Eligibility Verification, a copy of Driver's License and Social Security card, Scotland County Information Sheet and ACH Direct Deposit of Payroll Authorization Agreement.

State praises DSS financial services staff

State of North Carolina, Division of Social Services recognized the local DSS financial services staff at the recent statewide meeting. Staff received a Certificate of Merit for the month of March because the agency had an 81.27 percent participation rate (those potentially eligible who actually participate). This gave the agency the 4th highest rate in the State. The staff also were recognized for having a 100 percent accuracy rate for 2005.



DSS staff accepting the certificate from Donald Arnette of the USDA are (left to right) Sherry Bradsher, Willette Jones, Jennie Lowe and Linda Graham.

the Birthday list for June

1 Lisa Locklear (Health); **2** Linda Locklear (Tax); **4** Ervin Johnson (Jail) and Travis Stone (Sheriff); **5** Dorothy Fields and Melinda McKoy (DSS) and Barbara Mack and Vicki Thrower (Health); **6** Leroy Davis (Public Buildings); **7** Bryant Higgins (Public Works); **8** Peggy Taylor (DSS); **9** Grady Lowery (Jail); **10** Don Wegner (Sheriff); **11** Larry Tunstall (Sheriff); **12** Sharon Davis (Transportation); **13** Ronnie Tunstall (EMS); **14** Kevin Rader (Sheriff), Eva Locklear (DSS) and Reginald Franklin (EMS); **15** Vincent Price (EMS); **16** Annie Locklear (Health); **18** Scottie Kirkley (EMS); **21** Linda Holland (Health); **23** Lucy Ellison (Jail); **24** Pam Reed (DSS); **25** Annie Freeman (Cooperative Extension); **26** Doug Stack (Sheriff); **27** Evangela McArthur (Health), Jonathan Dunn (Jail) and Bessie Bell (DSS); **28** Mac Tucker (EMS) and Sheryl Primus (DSS).

Post Scripts

Ernest Stephens, Inspections, is now certified as a Building Inspector Level III, which is the highest level that can be obtained in that area. Stephens also is certified at Level III in Plumbing. ☘ In EMS, **Tracie Patterson** is the March Employee of the Month, sponsored by Mac Tucker.

Kevin Strickland celebrates his three-year anniversary as an EMS employee. EMS staffed a booth at the recent Laurel Fest May 13 in order to provide address signs to the public. **Tommy Hatcher**, 911 dispatch supervisor, manned the booth and sold 27 blue reflective address signs. **Transportation and Emergency Management** also supported Laurel Fest with the loan of a shuttle van and radios for communication. ☘ In Health Department news: Congratulations to **Kathie Cox**, named April Employee of the Month. The agency raised more than \$2,650 for the **March of Dimes**. Congratulations to **Ed Cushman**, RS Intern, for successfully completing the Food and Lodging authorization examination and to **Jannett Garcia** for successfully completing Interpreter III training. Congratulations to **Jannett Garcia** on her April 24 marriage to Juan Hose Garcia Suarez.

Newsletter gets color

Color along with an improved, sharper appearance is incorporated into the newsletter thanks to a new Xerox Phaser 7400 laserjet, which can print up to 36 pages per minute in color and 40 pages per minute in black and white.

The printer is networked for use by administrative staff and the Solid Waste Enforcement Officer.

Cost of producing the newsletter remains the same.

The Splash Pad will now be open weekends from Memorial Day until school ends. Call Parks and Recreation at 277-2585 for times.

Message from the Manager

All County employees should be required to attend a day at our State Legislature. For that matter, all our citizens should attend as well.

It is an educational experience that is difficult to explain. Walking between the two houses (Senate and House of Representatives) and seeing the difference in how they conduct business, it makes you wonder how they ever get together and pass legislation.



John A. Crumpton

The State entered this year's short session, which started May 9, with an anticipated budget surplus of \$2.4 billion dollars.

When Commissioners Leon Butler and Charles "Scoofer" Jordan, Finance Officer Kevin Patterson and I met with our legislators May 17, we were told the \$2.4 billion was already accounted for in the 06-07 budget.

I've heard of people spending money fast, but spending \$2.4 billion in a week takes the cake.

It was disappointing to hear that the Senate leadership does not support the \$65 million Medicaid relief bill that Scotland County's Senator Bill Purcell introduced and which the House supported.

This bill would cap the current spending at the 05-06 levels and then provide additional relief to the low wealth counties. Scotland County would have reduced its budgeted 06-07 Medicaid costs from \$3.74 million to less than \$3 million.

There are other bills being proposed and discussed, but it is apparent that there just isn't a consensus to support one single bill by all the parties, so I am doubtful Medicaid relief will be coming this year.

Scotland County has done a great job lobbying our local delegation and showing them the affects the State decisions have had on the financial situation in Scotland County.

Our local legislators completely understand our situation and have lobbied their fellow legislators on our behalf. We are thankful for their tireless efforts.

However, it is apparent that the Governor and the Senate leadership don't understand that the many years of sending unfunded mandates to the counties, taking revenue from the counties and reducing funding for existing programs have placed counties in a position where they can no longer raise property taxes to cover the State's obligations.

While in Raleigh we heard repeatedly that a tax increase would not pass any time soon in the Legislature. Too many Senators and Representatives have signed the "no new tax pledge" for this to happen.

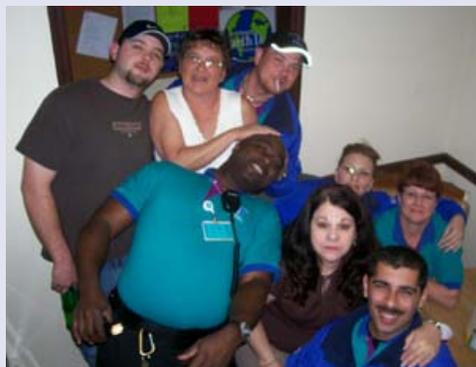
This means they must continue to take revenue and give expenses to counties. This means counties must either cut their own expenses or raise the property tax to continue operations.

THE LEADERSHIP IN RALEIGH DOESN'T HEAR OUR CITIZENS AND THEIR CRY FOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.

I hear it everyday. Not a day goes by that someone doesn't ask me when Scotland County will lower the tax rate.

After the May 17 excursion, I now recommend those folks go to Raleigh so they can see firsthand why Scotland County can't lower its tax rate.

Support circle works



Robert Sampson, Sandy Lockey and Gracie Rettig are Circle of Friends participants who have been nicotine-free since February, while the others are still on medication to assist in the transition to nicotine-free status. The Circle of Friends at EMS is an ongoing support group that includes back row, left to right, Charles "Bo" Watson, Rettig and Dennis Currie; middle row, Dontae Roland, June Hunt and Lockey; and front row Pat Lathrop and Sampson.

Questions about your health coverage? **10 hurricanes expected** FirstCarolinaCare has the answers

FirstCarolinaCare representatives have met with County employees over the past year to answer questions about health coverage. Below are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions.

Q. Do I need precertification for an MRI?

A. Yes. MRIs and some other services require precertification. FirstCarolinaCare uses nationally accepted evidence based guidelines to determine if a service meets criteria. You can find a list of services that require precertification on the FirstCarolinaCare website www.firstcarolinacare.com. You may also call 1-800-811-3298.

Q. Is it possible to get a 90-day supply of a maintenance drug?

A. Yes. You can get a 90-day supply of a prescription that is considered a maintenance drug (e.g. hormones, blood pressure medication). Ask your physician to write a new prescription for a 90-day supply plus 3 refills. You may take this prescription to Eckerd Pharmacy or WalMart to have it filled locally.

Q. How will I know if my provider is in network?

A. You can either look on the FirstCarolinaCare website at www.firstcarolinacare.com, call Member Services or check with your Human Resources department for a directory. Providers change periodically, so make sure to confirm they are in network before you go to your appointment. Remember that by using in-network providers you have the least out of pocket expense.

Q. I heard that as of March 1, 2006, a visit to the chiropractor will have the same copay as a primary care provider.

A. Yes. That is true. As of March 1, 2006, your visit to the chiropractor will have the same copay as your primary care provider. Just remember that chiropractic visits require precertification.

Q. I am diabetic. What is the best way for me to get my supplies?

A. Get your supplies by mail order, locally at Home Assist Medical Supply in Laurinburg or at your pharmacy. If you would like assistance or have questions, contact FirstCarolinaCare's Chronic Condition Management Program at 1-800-574-8556. Again, providers change periodically. Take steps to check that they are in network before a visit. Remember that by using in-network providers you have the least out-of-pocket expense.

An outdoor training session concludes EMS Week

First responders practiced setting up the Three Line Decontamination Tent and associated equipment purchased with Homeland Security funds during a decontamination training May 20.

A 600-square-foot multi-purpose tent, which can serve as a command post, field medical center, rehab shelter and/or communication center also was set up by the first responders.

Volunteers of this team consist of members of local Fire Departments, the Rescue Squad, the Sheriff's Department and EMS staff. The team also includes members from Scotland Memorial Hospital and the Health Department.

Another training session will be scheduled for late summer.

The training was done in conjunction with EMS Week, May 14 to 20, which included an open house at the EMS building and a lunch for EMS staff in appreciation of the service they provide to the citizens of Scotland County. EMS staff also received a gift of food and refreshments along with a note that read, "Compliments of Grateful Citizens."

EMS crews, who were out of the building on calls at the time the food was delivered, wish to thank everyone for their generous contributions. The staff greatly appreciated being remembered and would like to thank the "Grateful Citizens" for their kindness.

Ten hurricanes in the North Atlantic ocean with four to six of them becoming major storms was forecast for 2006 by the National Hurricane Center and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

NOAA predicts 13 to 16 named storms, with eight to 10 becoming hurricanes. Four to six could reach Category 3 strength or higher.

When a storm's winds reach 39 mph, it is assigned a name and is designated a tropical storm. It becomes a hurricane when its sustained winds reach 74 mph or higher. A Category 3 hurricane has winds between 111 to 130 mph and can cause extensive damage. The worst storm, a Category 5, has winds greater than 155 mph and can cause catastrophic damage.

It was a record year in 2005 with 28 named storms, including 15 hurricanes. After the list of 21 named storms is exhausted, the National Weather Service uses the Greek alphabet.

Five storm names from the 2005 season retired by the World Meteorological Organization were Dennis, Katrina, Rita, Stan and Wilma out of sensitivity to the victims.

Hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30.

Warmer ocean water combined with lower wind shear, weaker easterly trade winds, and a more favorable wind pattern in the mid-levels of the atmosphere are the factors that collectively will favor the development of storms in greater numbers and to greater intensity.

Warm water is the energy source for storms while favorable wind patterns limit the wind shear that can tear apart a storm's building cloud structure.



The Decontamination Tent was available for citizen inspection as part of a training session.

Construction at Recreation Complex gains momentum



Construction at the Recreation Complex currently involves three baseball-softball fields, a multipurpose field and a restroom-concession building. Distance of the baseball-softball fields is 320 feet to the outfield fence. Baseball-softball fields will include fencing, bleachers, dugouts, backstops and field irrigation. This phase of construction also includes an 18-hole Frisbee golf course, two picnic shelters, a playground, walking path and parking. Funding for two of the soccer field plus irrigation work and prep work for the two additional fields is made possible through a grant from the Tourism Development Authority.

Healthy Snacks for Team Sports promotes nutrition among youth

The number of overweight children and teenagers has more than tripled from the 1960s to 2002 according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The nationwide epidemic of obesity and its related health consequences is a growing concern for Scotland County citizens.

“It’s time to take action for ourselves, our families and our community,” said Kathie Cox, Health Educator and Health Promotion Coordinator.

Once again, during baseball signups, Scotland County Health Department, Healthy Carolinians and Scotland County Parks and Recreation promoted “Healthy Snacks for Team Sports” by providing 28-ounce water bottles along with healthy nutrition and snack information, which would encourage children participating in team sports to drink more water and eat healthier snacks.

Parks and Recreation adopted a “Healthy Foods Policy” last summer to promote and encourage healthy eating and good nutrition through team sports and other related activities.

“We want parents and coaches to encourage these kids to build healthier lifestyles at an early age,” said Cox. “Most importantly, we want to help decrease the risk of children developing major health problems later in life.”

Some examples of healthy snacks include graham crackers, ginger snaps, raisins and nuts, which are low in sugar and fat, fresh fruits such as orange slices, strawberries and bananas and water, flavored water or fruit juices rather than sodas.

SCATS receives new bus



A new SCATS Transit Bus will be put into service June 1 replacing a 1994 gasoline-powered, 24-passenger bus previously used for the 30-stop, fixed route. The 30-stop route will continue at the same locations with service provided from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Cost is \$1 per rider.

Although the new bus actually holds 18 passengers, it is equipped with a wheelchair lift at the back of the vehicle to accommodate NCDOT ADA regulations. The new bus has a diesel engine and LED lighting. The operator will have a PA system to make announcements to passengers.



Science teacher Brad Thomson and student Joe Sojka examine an egg for fertility as part of a 4-H embryology project, which produced seven hatched chicks.

Here a chick, there a chick, everywhere a chick chick!

A 4-H Embryology Project with 12 chick eggs resulted in seven successful hatches. The project, which incubated the eggs for 21 days, was piloted by Brad Thomson’s 5th grade science class at Covington Street School.

The youth turned the eggs three times a day, maintained records, kept the trays filled with water and insured proper incubation temperature. The youth said their favorite part was watching the seven chicks hatch and develop. Three other eggs were found to be infertile while two failed to produce.

The 4-H’ers were happy the chicks found a good home at the farm of Livestock Agent Tiffanee Conrad Acuna.

EMStatistics

EMS Report for April:

Responded to 434 Medical/
Trauma calls

Treated 47 motor vehicle accident
patients

Administered 89 wellness/blood
pressure checks

Sold 24 blue address signs

911 Report Highlights:

419 EMS

279 Sheriff's Department

165 Laurinburg Police

Department

95 Fire Department

609 hang-up calls

92 wrong numbers

50 open line calls

1,173 cellular calls

2,000 total calls to 911

Top five complaints for EMS Response

66 breathing problems

48 transfer/interfacility/palliative
care sick person (specific diagnosis)

47 traffic accidents

45 sick person (specific
diagnosis)

44 chest pain

Weather Observations

(EMS Recordings)

Temp (high) 94 on 4/15,17

Temp (low) 36 on 4/10

Wind (mph) 44 on 4/30

Rainfall (inches) .54 on 4/27

Compiled by Tommy Hatcher

Introductions & transitions

Welcome to those individuals who joined Scotland County departments since March 16, 2006: **Bruce Clark, John Deese, Traci Oxendine** and **Vincent Price** part-time with EMS; **Edward Cushman** and **Teresa Herring**, Health; **Jason Byrd**, Sheriff; and **Joyce Maynor**, DSS.

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.



**Ben Vereen with librarian
Leora Davis**

Actor Ben Vereen makes surprise visit

When actor Ben Vereen began the search for his birth mother, all roads led to Laurinburg.

It was in Laurinburg where the search came to a successful and bittersweet conclusion.

His mother, Essie Pearson Middleton, was born in Laurinburg and lived there before relocating to New Haven, Connecticut, where she remained until her death.

Vereen's family legacy continues in Laurinburg through St. John's Holiness Church on Tuskegee Drive, which was founded by his grandfather W.P. Pearson.

Vereen, 60, located relatives as close as Kingstree, South Carolina, during his three-day stay in Scotland County. A family reunion is planned later this year.

Vereen was told that Middleton was a big fan of his, although she never knew he was her son. He also was told that Middleton never forgot him and searched for him on numerous occasions.

Vereen credits the staff at the Register of Deeds and Scotland Memorial Library for their assistance. It was at the Register of Deeds where he learned that Pearson was his mother's maiden name. He is grateful to everyone who assisted him.

According to his birth certificate, Laurinburg was listed as his mother's birthplace. "I don't know how I got into the hands of the people who raised me," said Vereen. "I thank her for giving birth to me. It's important that my children know about her."

The trip to Scotland County has been a sentimental one. "It is nice to walk around these streets and to be where she once was," he said.

Vereen's career as an actor, dancer and singer in movies and on television and stage spans four decades. A philanthropist, Vereen is active in the American Heart Association, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Association and Celebrities for a Drug Free America, which he organized.

File accident reports immediately

Accidents and injuries while on the job must be reported to the insurance carrier within 24 hours of the incident.

On the day of an accident or injury, if possible, the incident must be reported to Lynn Poe in the County Manager's Office or Personnel Administrator Susan Butler. It is particularly important to report an incident if it involves both property damage and an injury.

Follow up after the call with the report. The claim must be submitted within a 24-hour period even without a report, so it is equally important to provide Poe or Butler with as much information as possible.

An employee who is involved in an accident or injury must notify their supervisor immediately so the supervisor can investigate the accident scene.

If there is damage to property, take pictures. It would be helpful to purchase disposable cameras to be placed in all County vehicles.

Getting information from the scene immediately after an incident is critical to the claim. The more time it takes to piece an accident together, the more cost involved in the claim.

In addition, prompt response to an accident or injury allows the claims adjuster to contact the impacted party in a timely fashion and in advance of any possible lawsuits.

**Public Hearing on the FY 2006-2007 Proposed Budget
is 7 p.m. June 5 in the Commissioners Chamber**