

NOVEMBER 2016

Scotland County, NC



A newsletter for the Scotland County community

Line dancing success on show for District Director McRae

Some do it for fun and fellowship. Others do it for the health benefits and for relief from chronic pain. The reasons to line dance are numerous. That's why Tuesday evening line dancing has become a schedule staple for nearly 60 people — men and women, all ages, all backgrounds.

Curious about why so many people were attending, line dancing hosts Extension and Community Association (ECA) asked participants to fill out a survey. 43 were submitted.

Here is what they had to say about their health results:

20 reported a decrease in AIC.

21 reported an improved cholesterol level.

23 reported improved blood pressure.

27 lost weight.

36 reported improved balance.

40 experienced increased energy level.

28 lost inches.

37 reported improved social skills.

39 became more active.

Because of its popularity 15 participants volunteered to demonstrate what they learned for Clinton McRae, Cooperative Extension District Director. McRae visited the local agency to review its community outreach and success stories, line dancing among them.

McRae even learned the steps for Zydeco Bounce as he joined the participants on the dance floor.

Weekly line dancing began in August 2015. The ECA wanted to host a regular event that promoted wellness as well as social engagement.

It was scheduled for Thursdays in the Cooperative Extension meeting room. Only a handful of people attended in the first few months. ECA decided to change the day to Tuesday and the location to Scotland Place. The changes made a difference. People started coming. Attendance grew through word of mouth.

Some Tuesdays, more than 60 people dance. New people give it a try just about every week.

Participants were also asked in the survey what motivated them to continue to dance every week. Here are some answers:

"I met people I didn't know."

"My joints improved."

"Arthritis improved. I'm wearing clothes I couldn't wear."

"Able to see different races interact without conflict."

"Feel better overall."

Courthouse message



In God We Trust was installed outside the courthouse. The Board of Commissioners in May approved placing In God We Trust on the courthouse following a request from the U.S. MottoAction Committee. Local private donations funded the project, which cost \$2,500. **Photo by Mike McGirt, Public Buildings**

Two paths forward for customer service training

Since July nine trainers conducted eight customer service training sessions. Employee evaluations of the the training were mostly positive.

"People seemed to have a good time. They enjoyed it. They liked the interaction of the role-playing activities," said Safety Coordinator Lori Parks, who revamped the training along with Human Resources Manager Susan Butler and Clerk to the Board Ann Kurtzman.

Evaluations were compiled at the conclusion of the training sessions for all current employees.

"You have to find a good balance between having enough time to cover the material so they have a good handle on it and the application of it when they walk out the door versus it drones on forever," explained Parks.

In response to some evaluations that stated the training was too long, Parks said, "We can get it down to between 60 and 90 minutes, and that might be better."

"We did pick up on areas where the material might be redundant," said Parks. "We streamlined our presentation portion going forward."

More interaction between trainer and participant and more activities will keep the interest level elevated in future training sessions.

Parks said customer service training moving forward will take two paths. "One of those is to continue the base information from a County perspective, the basic ideas of what good customer service is all about. New hires will take the training during sessions scheduled quarterly to get that base message."

Parks said the second path is for all those who completed the training. "We'll keep the momentum going by targeting specific customer service topics each month. The trainers would be involved in funneling those messages out."

The messages would go out through email blasts with information or videos on specific customer service topics. The current training was based on a 2010 model. It was updated and relaunched at the request of the Commissioners.

Just the facts: Scotland County is ranked 67 out of the 100 counties in total population for 2016. In 1970, Scotland County was ranked 54. It is expected to be ranked 71 in 2035. **Source: NC Office of State Budget Management.**

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United Way fundraiser surpasses 2015 effort

The Scotland County United Way Campaign fundraiser brought in \$604, more than doubling the \$300 raised in 2015. This year a lunch component was added to the silent auction, which featured County Manager Kevin Patterson's famous chili.

Employees who came for the chili lunch offered in super-hot, medium and vegetarian also had opportunity to place a silent auction bid on baked goods, a car wash, Hornets tickets and gift items.

For those who couldn't stay or return at 2 p.m. for the close of the silent auction, volunteers offered high bid assistance and continued to bid on items at the request of the absent employees.

United Way Fundraiser Planning Committee members Lori Parks, Amy Miller, Wendy Dunn and Ann Kurtzman wish to thank Patterson for making three big pots of chili the night before the event (as if he doesn't have anything else to do), staff and their relatives and friends who donated gifts and baked goods and all those who supported the effort by purchasing a chili lunch and placing bids on silent auction items.

Our condolences to...

Dean Russell, Public Buildings, on the recent passing of his mother-in-law; **Carolyn Walls**, DSS, on the November 6 passing of her brother, James Ernest McRae; **Lorianne Knight**, EMS, on the November 21 passing of her mother-in-law; **Nicole McLaurin** and **Samira McLaurin**, DSS, and **Walter McLaurin**, Transportation, on the November 23 passing of Howard McLaurin, Sr., grandfather-in-law to Nicole McLaurin, great-grandfather to Samira McLaurin and father to Walter McLaurin.

The December birthday list

2 Kimberly Cheek (DSS) and Matthew Lowery (Public Buildings); **4** Lloyd Goins (Sheriff) and Scott Parks (Inspections); **5** Wendy Stanton (DSS); **6** Tracie Patterson (EMS); **7** Guy McCook (Commissioner); **8** Jessica Friede and Ronnie McGee (Sheriff) and James Nichols (Jail); **9** Robert Jones (Transportation); **10** Gina Paul (EMS) and Kendria Finkley (Library); **15** James Brown (Tax) and Matthew Jones (EMS); **17** Kathie Cox (Health); **18** Shakeanma McDougald (DSS), Nicki Peek (Health) and Amanda Reagan (Sheriff); **19** Louise Williams (Library); **20** Earl Haywood (Sheriff) and Wanda Hassler (Health); **21** Teresa Gorden (DSS); **23** Barbara Lebetter (DSS) and Barbara Britt (DSS); **25** Demetrice Jones (DSS); **26** John Alford (Commissioner) and Carol Capel (Cooperative Extension); **28** James Pratt (Public Buildings); **29** Maisha McLaurin (DSS) and Mitchell Woods (Jail); **30** Maria Roberts (Health).

Bees, bats and recycling, oh, my!

More than 90 Carver Middle School students and six instructors participated in Environmental Awareness Field Day hosted by the Soil and Water Conservation District.



Solid Waste Enforcement Officer J.R. Horne discusses the importance of recycling.

This was the first year the event was held at the Morgan Recreation Complex, a change of venue from the Lumber River State Park.

Conservation Director Amy Miller said it is likely field day will continue at the Morgan Complex in the future because the open space made it easier to move students from one learning station to the next.

Learning stations included soils, recycling, bees, bats and air quality.

Miller said the students enjoyed field day, particularly the air quality table. "They used different food colorings to drop in water to demonstrate that the things people do in daily life can affect air quality."

Miller said, "The students learned a lot, especially about the importance of bees and bats in the environment and also exactly how much we pollute the air."

DSS, Health to get deputy position

A new deputy position will maintain security at Social Services and the Health Department. Instances of unruly behavior and even violence in the last few months prompted DSS, the Health Department and the Sheriff's Office to request the Commissioners approve the position.

Sheriff Ralph Kersey said he hopes to fill the position with someone who has grown up in Scotland County. "That would help tremendously because the deputy would know a lot of people in the County."

Kersey added, "This will help us give DSS and the Health Department the protection they need and have been needing for a long time."

Line dancing brings fun, fellowship

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"Excellent exercise for the brain."

"Good for my heart."

"My back feels better."

"I feel great after all the energy comes together."

"It helped me to have more confidence."

"It's a great stress reliever."

"The instructors are marvelous. They take their time to teach you the steps with the greatest patience and understanding."

"Line dancing is very good cardio and great exercise for the body and the mind."

"I just wish we could meet two days instead of one."

"There is always room to learn without stress and without competition."

Line dancing class is free. Beginners learn steps from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Everyone is invited to stay and dance from 6:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.



The group teaches Clinton McRae, center, the Zydeco Bounce. Photo by Sherilyn Mims, Administration