

FEBRUARY 2015



Scotland County, NC

A newsletter for the Scotland County community

In an emergency, call 911

If there's an emergency, call 911. Effective 8 a.m. February 10, the County transitioned to 911 for any kind of emergency involving Laurinburg Police, EMS, Sheriff and Fire Department.

The transition to 911 as the official emergency call number is the result of the consolidation of all emergency dispatch services at the new Emergency Operations/911 Call Center on West Boulevard.

"The phone systems at the Emergency Operations Center will change," explained 911 Call Center Director Mike Edge. "If you call 1313, which is EMS, or if you call 3211 for the Laurinburg Police Department, 3385 for the Sheriff's Department or 1811 for the Fire Department, you will actually be put through to the administrative lines for those services; but you will not be getting to somebody who can dispatch that person for you."

Edge added, "What you need to do after February 10, is call 911 for any time you will need a uniformed officer at your doorstep, a paramedic at your doorstep or a firefighter or a Sheriff's Department deputy at your doorstep."

"When a person calls 911, telecommunicators at the 911 Call Center will see the call's location information, which means emergency calls will be processed a lot faster," Edge said.

Calls to Laurinburg Police, Sheriff, EMS or Fire Department administrative numbers during the day will likely hear a message that states that in the event of an emergency, hang up and dial 911; if not, hold on for administrative information for the Sheriff's Department, EMS, Laurinburg Fire Department and the Police Department.

"This will be a learning experience," Edge said. He added that the message regarding the 911 emergency line will be a permanent fixture on the administrative phone system. "If anyone needs law enforcement, firemen or an ambulance in an emergency, they need to dial 911."

Patterson fields questions from community at annual event

In his State of the Community address, County Manager Kevin Patterson focused his presentation on written questions and concerns received through the Chamber of Commerce, host of the event.

This was the first time the State of the Community event was held at the new Emergency Operations Center where Patterson and City Manager Charles Nichols made presentations before 50 individuals in attendance.

Patterson updated attendees on the search for a new Economic Development Director. After a series of interviews, members of the community that partnered with the economic developer in the past will have opportunity to help with an assessment of two candidates. The group will then make a recommendation to Patterson.

"Hopefully we are far closer than we have been in filling that position," Patterson said.

The County Manager also responded to a question about Scotland County being identified as the poorest county in the State.

"The data has not changed in the last 10 years," Patterson said. "The difference is the change in terminology. In the past, it was just poverty, but [see Employment, page 3](#)

Pratt named Register of Deeds

Scotland County native Lindsey Page Pratt III was appointed Register of Deeds February 27 by the Board of Commissioners. Pratt replaces Debra Holcomb and will serve the remainder of her term, which expires December 1, 2016. Holcomb will retire March 2.

Pratt's appointment was recommended to the Board of Commissioners by the Democratic Party after an eight-member committee made up of Commissioners and party representatives interviewed five candidates.

Pratt served as Chief Operating Officer of Reaves Engraving, a business started in 1933 by his great aunt and uncle. A Wake Forest University graduate, Pratt earned a law degree from the University of Georgia.

After the Democratic Party made its recommendation public February 14, Pratt began working with Holcomb in the Register of Deeds office. "Debby and her staff have been great," said Pratt. "they've worked with me to go over the different processes that are taking place in the office and to make sure everything flows smoothly from her to me and for the County."



Beth Hobbs appointed Finance Officer

The Board of Commissioners appointed Beth Hobbs as Finance Officer effective immediately. Hobbs recently achieved certification as a North Carolina Certified Local Government Finance Officer. Hobbs was hired as Deputy Finance Officer in August 2013.

"This was the exact position she was hired for," said County Manager Kevin Patterson. "There was no doubt she would move forward in a very short time period."

Patterson said he wanted Hobbs to get a full year of experience in finance responsibilities with County government before she stepped up.

A lifelong resident of Scotland County, Hobbs is a Scotland High School graduate. She earned her B.S. in accounting from UNC-Pembroke in 2001.

Prior to employment with Scotland County, Hobbs worked as an accountant with Gustaf C. Lundin & Company, LLP, and served as finance officer for the Lumber River Council of Governments.

Wayne Raynor returns as Interim Health Director

Wayne Raynor will once again serve as Interim Health Director. Raynor had previously served as Interim Health Director from October 2011 until August 2013 when David Jenkins was named Health Director.

Jenkins left his position as Health Director, effective February 27. He accepted the position as Carteret County Health Director and Assistant Director of the county's combined Human Services Agency.

The Scotland County Board of Health appointed Jenkins as Director in August 2013. "I think David did a good job while he was here," said Health Board Chairman Bob Davis. "Although he will be missed, we wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors."

Davis said it is the intention of the Board of Health to ensure the momentum of public health initiatives developed during Jenkins' tenure be maintained.

Under Jenkins' leadership, maternal and child health clinics were reintroduced to the agency in February. CURE MD, a new electronic health records system, was launched in December.

Jenkins worked to elevate the level of customer service at the agency by seeking and responding to client feedback and initiating the makeover of the registration and waiting room area into a more customer-friendly space.

Ongoing projects include the update of the Animal Control Ordinance and Health Summit activities, which will address obesity and cardiovascular disease as priority health concerns.

Raynor is a 35-year veteran in public health. He served as Health Director in Cumberland and Harnett counties and as interim director in Pender County. He also worked for 20 years with the NC Department of Health and Human Services.



Wayne Raynor

Our condolences to ...

Gene Jackson, Public Buildings and Grounds retiree, on the January 25 passing of his mother, Betty Jean Jackson; **Antonia Rainer**, DSS, on the February 13 passing of her grandmother, Lillie Dockery; **Danny Sprouse**, Health Department retiree, on the February 14 passing of his mother-in-law, Mary Ruth Shaw McDonald; **Lt. Anne Griffin**, Sheriff's Office, on the recent passing of her mother; **Rachel Beach**, Tax, on the February 16 passing of her brother, Gordon "Tony" Jacobs; **Gracie Rettig**, Transportation, on the February 17 passing of her brother, Harvey Laviner; **Joesphine Thompson**, Public Buildings, on the February 22 passing of her mother.

Home goes from vacant to occupied thanks to partnership solution

The dedication of the 45th Habitat for Humanity home in Scotland County was an historic moment for the community. The home at 109 East Vance Street was a rehab structure that had been vacant for some 14 years. It was destined for foreclosure.

But a partnership Habitat developed with the County and City of Laurinburg saved the vacant home from demolition.

Habitat Executive Director Susan Covington said at the dedication ceremony that rehabilitating an existing home whenever possible is good for the community and good for the neighborhood where the structure is located.

Vice Chair Carol McCall spoke on behalf of the County at the dedication. "This proves what people can do when they work together. This was a community solution that worked."

The deed to the one-story bungalow was transferred to Habitat for Humanity in July 2013 so the non-profit could rehabilitate the home for occupancy.

Covington said the family who will live in the home, which is valued at \$88,000, like all Habitat families, are taxpaying citizens.

"No one gets anything for free. The homeowner has to have an income to be able to pay for their homes." Payment includes mortgage, taxes and insurance.

County Manager Kevin Patterson in July 2013 provided the Board of Commissioners three options regarding the property — transfer ownership to Habitat for Humanity, sell it at public auction along with other foreclosed properties the County owns or ask the City of Laurinburg to condemn and demolish the structure.

Patterson recommended that the County transfer ownership to Habitat, since the agency confirmed it could secure its future as a viable property, and the Commissioners agreed.

Covington said, "I hope this is the beginning of a transformation process for the City and County, Habitat for Humanity and the families we serve."

Prescription card use fluctuates

The number of prescriptions purchased using the NACo-sponsored Prescription Drug Discount Card was 112 in January, up from 101 in December but down from 140 prescriptions purchased in January 2014.

The NACo program in cooperation with Caremark offered the best prices on 40 prescriptions in January.

Since Scotland County opted to participate in the program in September 2006, 23,355 prescriptions from 8,219 utilizers have been processed at participating pharmacies for a total price savings of \$190,254 for customers.

Prescription cards are available at 507 West Covington Street or call 277-3191 or email akurtzman@scotlandcounty.org to pick up cards, which are free. No registration is required.



109 East Vance Street, July 2013



109 East Vance Street, February 2015

March 21 sees return of popular community shred, medicine drop

Two popular events, Community Shred and Operation Medicine Drop, will join forces March 21 to give citizens a no-cost, one-stop opportunity to protect themselves from identity theft and prevent accidental poisonings.

The two events will occur simultaneously with the Community Shred running from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. or when the truck is full, whichever comes first, and Operation Medicine Drop scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The events will be held at the Walgreens store parking lot located at 821 Westwood Way in Laurinburg, adjacent to US 15-401 Bypass.

The New Year usually brings about thoughts of change and improvements. Many times we promise ourselves to be better organized and reduce the clutter we have accumulated throughout the past year.

However, we can easily become overwhelmed as we sort through paperwork, old receipts, forms, documents, etc., that occupy valuable space in our homes.

The Community Shred, sponsored by Scotland County Cooperative Extension and ECA (Extension and Community Association), provides citizens a safe way to dispose of confidential information in an effort to prevent identity theft.

This service is offered free of charge for individuals only with a limit of four boxes or 100 pounds per person. Scotland County citizens and those living in surrounding counties are encouraged to participate.

Pro-Shred, a company that specializes in secure document management, will provide the shred service. Volunteers will be on hand to assist participants with transporting their boxes to the shred truck.

"We are excited to provide citizens this great opportunity to safely dispose of their confidential information," said Sharon English, Cooperative Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent. "I would like to thank Walgreens for their co-sponsorship and support of both the Community Shred event and Operation Medicine Drop."

Citizens will not have to remove staples, paper clips, or plastic sleeves as the equipment can shred these items along with the paper.

The 6th Annual Operation Medicine Drop is sponsored by the Laurinburg Police Department, Scotland County Sheriff's Department, Scotland County Safe Kids Mid-Carolinas Region and North Carolina Safe Kids. Citizens can safely rid their homes of unwanted over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

Many significant problems are associated with unused and expired drugs in the home. Drugs often are left unsecured in cabinets and on counters. Improper use of drugs may cause an overdose and drug interactions. Accidental poisoning from ingestion of drugs among children and pets often occurs in homes where medicine is easily accessible. For example, about 40 percent of poisoning among children occurs in the homes of grandparents.

Furthermore, the disposal of unwanted drugs as household trash or by flushing them down the sink or toilet is unwise and dangerous to the environment, potentially contaminating the water supply.

"We want to encourage citizens to take advantage of this opportunity to safely dispose of unused and expired medication," said Corporal J. Byrd of the Laurinburg Police Department. "The ultimate goal of this program is to reduce accidental poisonings, prevent drug abuse and protect our waters. Citizens will not be questioned about the medication or how they obtained it."

For more information on the Community Shred event, contact Scotland County Cooperative Extension at 277-2422. For more information on Operation Medicine Drop, contact Corporal Byrd, Laurinburg Police Department at 276-3211.



Community Shred at Walgreens in 2014.

Commissioners invite service from citizens

The County Commissioners are always looking for interested citizens who wish to serve on one of dozens of boards or committees.

"It's always good to look at our boards and the vacancies that need appointments," said Vice Chair Carol McCall. "We want to encourage all citizens to become engaged and active," she added.

A list of all board vacancies is posted on the Scotland County website at www.scotlandcounty.org. Click on boards and committees in the Government drop down menu to review the vacancies.

Anyone interested in serving on a board or committee or who has questions about a specific board is encouraged to contact McCall at cmccall@scotlandcounty.org.

"I can go over what some of the roles and responsibilities are of a board appointment and match it with what ever interest a person might have in serving the citizens of Scotland County," McCall said.

Employment an event topic

continued from page 1

unemployment and other economic factors are now used,

including economic disadvantage. Then the statistics show us as a weaker case than everyone else."

"This is not an actual change for Scotland County," Patterson added, "It's just a reminder that we have to continue to work harder to improve ourselves and make sure we're ready for that next business or industry that wants to look at us and wants to know if we have an available job force."

Patterson said that's a reason the Commissioners sent a letter of interest to Sanderson Farms, a processing facility that some in the community might be against while others might favor.

Patterson said the County has always had an unemployment rate about 70 percent higher than the State average. In any type of unemployment you have an unskilled workforce that just cannot compete with the advanced manufacturing that we have.

"Although Sanderson Farms would have a significant amount of advanced manufacturing, they also would have a number of low skill jobs that would still pay a livable wage."

Patterson said that was one of the reasons the Commissioners entertained the possibility of inviting Sanderson Farms to consider Scotland County.

1 Bud McAllister (Inspections); **2** Richard Brown (Health); **4** Catherine Stubbs (Tax) and Gwendolyn Bennett (EMS); **5** Samantha Hetrick (EMS); **6** Latoya Williams (Sheriff) and Nancy Pittman and Walter Hale (Transportation); **7** Jeffrey Cooke (Sheriff) and Felisa McKeithan (Transportation); **9** Tanya Graves (DSS); **11** Sherilynn Mims (Administration); **12** June Hunt and Bruce Hasty (EMS) and Reginald Drakeford and Ricky Wright (Public Buildings); **13** Pamela Smith (Sheriff) and Phyllis Clark (Health); **14** Mary White (EMS); **15** Anthony George (Sheriff); **16** Malcolm McClellan (Jail) and Annie Malloy (Health); **18** Jonathan Simmons (Jail); **20** Misty Dial (EMS) and Gracie Rettig (Transportation); **21** Kathaleen Stewart (DSS); **24** Mary Helen Norton (Tax); Oscar Henderson (EMS) and Rhonda Cox, Elizabeth Shutt and Vanessa Clark (DSS); **25** Jimmy Sanderson (Jail); **28** Rodney Tucker (Sheriff); **30** Shaneall Smith (Parks and Recreation).

Post Scripts Teresa Jacobs, DSS, is proud of her nephew, Jarred D. Jacobs, on his January 16 graduation as a State Trooper from the North Carolina State Highway Patrol Academy. He was among 54 graduates out of a class of 106 that started the program in June 2014. **✂ Roger Dial** and **Mike McGirt**, Public Buildings, attended the National Electrical Code Analysis of Changes I class January 24 at the RCC Honeycutt Center. This class will help the Public Buildings Department be aware of any code changes that might affect future electrical projects. **✂** Welcome to those employees hired since December 16: **Kisha Locklear**, Health; **Barbara Britt**, **Bryan Knight**, **Burnard Thompson**, **Danile J. McClellan**, **James Kelley**, **Jerry Glover**, **Jimmy Sanderson**, **Jonathan Simmons**, **Kenneth Samuda**, **Laura Prevatte**, **Sandra Miller** and **Vacardo Riggins**, Jail; **Michael Hunt**, Parks and Recreation; **Elvis Edwards**, Public Buildings; **Annette Gooselin**, **Clyde Smith**, **Earl Haywood**, **Gary Webb**, **James Britt**, **Jason Butler**, **Michael Woods**, **Neill Sweatt**, **Pamela Smith**, **Ralph Kersey**, **Rebecca Strickland**, **Rodney Tucker**, **Tina Strickland** and **Tonya Gay**, Sheriff; **Amanda Martin**, **Kristie Johnson** and **Nicole Grant**, DSS.

911 Call Center tested and passes with flying colors

Since February 10, the Emergency Operations Center has fielded around 300 911 calls a day. When the ice arrived February 16, there were more than 1,200 calls in a 24-hour period.

“It was handled without incident,” said County Manager Kevin Patterson. “It was chaotic along with everything else, putting up a new system, but it worked well.”

Patterson added, “Most of the citizens probably haven’t noticed that we’ve changed, which is a good thing.”

**It’s time to organize a team.
Spring 2015 Litter Sweep is
the week of April 13 to 18.**

Fate of Laurel Hill Community Center a discussion topic at March 5 drop-in

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will hold a drop-in 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Thursday, March 5, at the Laurel Hill Community Center. The purpose of the drop-in is to seek input from citizens on the fate and/or use of the Laurel Hill Community Center building. It is hoped a core interest group will be formed as a result of the event that will guide the process. Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Chair Leigh Carter along with key Parks and Recreation staff will host the drop-in. The gymnasium is used for open gym and Parks and Recreation basketball. The rest of the main building, which is the auditorium and four classrooms, is currently closed and not in use except for limited training by the U.S. Army. The Advisory Board is gauging public interest and will make a recommendation to the County Commissioners on the *Fate of the LHCC — It’s in Your Hands* project. The March 5 drop-in is open to the public and will be held in the nutrition site room. Light refreshments will be served.

Gun permits available on Saturdays

The Sheriff’s Office is now open Saturdays for gun permits. Anyone who plans to purchase a gun or owns a gun can apply for a permit now on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Captain Mitch Johnson, Public Information Officer for the Sheriff’s Office, said, “We’ll carry out the same procedures that we normally do Monday through Friday. Saturday makes it convenient for everyone because it will be a great convenience for a lot of people, especially for those who work late and can’t get back until the weekend. So that’s the benefit.” Use the entrance at the Magistrate’s Office at the side of the Courthouse.

Grant helps with computer purchases

The Governor’s Crime Commissioner awarded a \$25,000 grant to the Sheriff’s Department for computer replacements, which would allow the Department to communicate and file reports from their vehicles. Mobile data terminals will replace the existing laptops in the vehicles. That means officers will be able to write reports and send it straight to the server while in the field. New copiers will be networked in the Sheriff’s Department, which will eliminate the expense for maintenance and supplies for personal desk printers. The Sheriff’s Department hopes to receive an additional \$25,000 grant to replace the camera system in the Jail.



April Snead

Informal drop-in held for Snead

Staff presented April Snead with an official nameplate during an informal reception in her honor February 3. Snead was appointed DSS Director in December.

Tax group hosted here

The Tax Department hosted about 46 visitors from nine counties and four vendors February 19. The Lower Cape Fear Tax Association, whose membership includes tax office employees and administrators from Scotland County to the coast, met at Woolly McDuff’s Neighborhood Grill for business updates and training. Guest speaker was a representative from the NC Department of Revenue.