

JULY 2015



Scotland County, NC

A newsletter for the Scotland County community

New Health Director joins County August 3

Bengie M. Hair will be the new Health Director, effective August 3.

A 20-year veteran in private and public health on the state and federal levels, Hair most recently served for two years as a public health administrator and health educator at the Moore County Health Department.

Prior to that he worked for the Virginia Department of Health as Assistant Director for Medication Access Program.

He also worked for the federal Department of Health and Human Services and served in several hospital settings before that.

Hair earned a Master of Liberal Studies/Healthcare Management from Duke University and a Bachelor of Science from The American University School of Government and Public Administration.

A native of Fayetteville, Hair is familiar with Scotland County. During the course of his career in public health Hair worked in and around North Carolina including Scotland County.

Hair replaces David Jenkins, who accepted a similar position in Carteret County in February 2014 after 18 months of service in Scotland County. Wayne Raynor has been serving as Interim Health Director since Jenkins departed.

State plans preventive measures to avoid an outbreak of avian influenza

As one of the largest producers of poultry in the country, North Carolina sees avian influenza as a very real threat.

Mark Howell, Emergency Program Specialist, NC Department of Agriculture, just returned from Minnesota and Iowa where avian flu resulted in the depopulation of a significant amount of poultry. Howell is instrumental in developing a plan for North Carolina in the event of an avian influenza outbreak.

Highly pathogenic avian influenza, who's been affected by it and how the State

will address it if it comes here all were topics Howell discussed as guest speaker at the annual hurricane meeting. "I should title this a bird flu hurricane," Howell said.

Avian influenza was first discovered in a backyard flock in Washington State in December 2014.

A commercial crop in California was infected in January 2015, probably carried by a migratory bird. In March and April avian influenza spread to Alberta, Canada, and then to Minnesota and Iowa. Now 21 states have infected birds. Avian influenza is not just exclusive to poultry. It's also been diagnosed in ducks, geese and raptors.

"Once the birds are infected with the virus, they start dying fast," Howell explained. "It's very virulent and very pathogenic. It takes about two days for the disease to spread completely through a house and, in seven days, mortalities are as high as 99 percent. It's like a wildfire burning on steroids in the disease world."

Howell stressed that it has not infected humans yet, although there is a possibility it could go zoonotic and infect both birds and humans.

Howell predicted the east coast might be affected this fall because of the eastern migratory flyways in ducks and geese. Because the State brings in billions of dollars in

[see Avian, page 4](#)

Reading program concludes



Children learned to respect reptiles during Snakes Alive! at the library. The 2015 Summer Reading Program concludes August 5 with a 2 p.m. performance by storyteller Tyriss Jones.

Always be prepared despite light hurricane season predictions

A very light year in hurricanes is expected in 2015. But EMS Director Roylin Hammond maintains at every annual hurricane meeting that it only takes one serious storm to make landfall. So it's important to always be prepared.

In 2015 predictions call for eight named storms, one of which will be serious. "We've already had three named storms, so we've only got five more to go," Hammond said.

Hammond explained that the water temperature in the Atlantic is a little bit higher than it normally is, and temperature tends to drive the creation of hurricanes. "That's one of the reasons the weather services are predicting a minor year."

Hammond added, "With that being said, and I've said this before, in 1992 we had one hurricane make landfall. That was Hurricane Andrew, and it likely took the bottom of Florida off. So

it only takes one. It doesn't matter what the predictions are. It would be totally insignificant in relationship to the devastation we could experience if we had a serious hurricane. Predictions are just predictions. What we need to do is be as prepared as possible."

If the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) had to activate, it would do so at the new EOC building. "This is a secure concrete building. You can't tell that from looking at it, but it would be the last building standing in our Country, we hope."

The secondary EOC location is the Dulin Center at Scotland Memorial Hospital.

"We would like to think that this building is secure enough that we wouldn't have to relocate. But we always want to have an alternative location," Hammond said. "I hope I don't see any of you until this same time next year for the reason that we're here."

The August birthday list

1 Willie Hunt (Public Works), Kimberly Foy (Jail) and Jessica Duke and Chena Jackson (DSS); 2 Benita Mullis (Health) and Lori Parks (Administration); 4 Hazel McPhatter (Cooperative Extension); 5 Michael McQueen (E-911 Center); 6 Gwendolyn Clark (DSS); 8 J.R. Horne (Public Works); 9 Jimmy Covington (Library); 11 James Kelley (Jail); 12 Janet Mudd (DSS); 13 Catherine Bailey (Health); 14 Kevin Strickland (EMS); 15 Dell Parker (Elections) and Samantha Ruiz (Administration); 17 Elvis Edwards and Michael Hunt (Public Buildings); 18 Tina Phillips (DSS); 19 Lorianne Knight (EMS); 20 Stephanie Palmer (DSS) and James Pruitte (Sports Complex); 24 Margaret McCaskill (EMS); 25 David Blalock (Sheriff); 28 Tenita Bullard (IT); 29 Mitch Johnson (Sheriff); 30 Kimberly McRae (DSS); 31 Katherine Caulder and Carolyn Walls (DSS) and Mark Dombrosky (IT).

Post Scripts

The following individuals joined Scotland County departments as of May 16, 2015: **Sharon Maag**, Inspections; **Clinton Gooselin** and **Dana Bethea**, Jail; **Amanda Williams**, **Jimmy Collins** and **Lloyd Goins**, Sheriff; **Angela Belcher**, DSS. ☼ Commissioner **Carol McCall** has been selected to participate in the Advanced Leadership Corps program to be held September 13 to 18 in Chapel Hill. The Advanced Leadership Corps was created in 2013, in conjunction with the School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the N.C. League of Municipalities as an initiative on mentoring and leadership. The Corps is a program for experienced local elected leaders who are committed to effectively governing and leading at community, regional and state levels.

Our condolences to ...

the family of former County Commissioner **Sam Snowden**, who passed away July 12.

Fracking options explored



The NC Highway Patrol and Division of Motor Vehicles offices next to the County Complex on West Boulevard were recently the site of State contracted core sampling to explore the possibility of drilling (fracking) for natural gas in Scotland County.

State-owned sites in several counties were selected for test well drilling. Pictured is drilling rig equipment that was used in Scotland County off West Boulevard. **Photo and text by Roylin Hammond, EMS.**

Landfill lawn and leaf pile reduced

Once a year the landfill conducts a screening process to reduce the amount of yard waste that piles up.

State regulations require that the pile of yard waste at the landfill be kept within a two-acre tract.

"Typically we exceed that limit but as long as we reduce the pile once a year, screen it and grind it, then we are in compliance with our regulations," said Public Works Supervisor Bryant Higgins.

"When yard waste comes to the landfill it's weighed, dumped and pushed in a pile once or twice a day," Higgins explained.

"Once it's ground up, the permit will allow the landfill to use it as cover. We can also put clays or sands down to stabilize the landfill and put the finer material on top of that to grow grass to support vegetative growth."

Higgins added, "The permit does not allow the landfill to sell what is ground to the public. It's got to stay on-site." Another State regulation doesn't permit yard waste in the C&D (construction and demolition) landfill.



An excavator, left, and trommel, are used to reduce the lawn and leaf pile at the landfill.

Cost of screening yard waste this year was an estimated \$40,000, which paid for three men who worked a total of 80 hours. The landfill contracted with an outside company to do the job of reducing the limb and leaf pile.

Four pieces of equipment were utilized in the screening process. The equipment included a trommel screen, two excavators and a dozier crane.

Higgins said it is more efficient to contract out the screening. The equipment is high maintenance and too costly for the landfill to own, particularly the grinder because of maintenance costs.

Higgins said the screening process usually occurs in summer. "You want to catch it at the time of year like now when it's at its driest. You get better production when the material is drier. That's what we waited on and planned for, June, first part of July."

Higgins said as long as there is a C&D landfill in operation, the ground material has a practical use. "Whenever it comes to the point where the C&D landfill could be closed out, this material technically could be used to help cover and close out the landfill as a soil to support vegetative growth."

For now, Higgins said, "It's got to be managed somehow. We've got more leaf and limb than we can use but later on down the road in years to come, it could eventually be used to help closeout the landfill."

The ground material currently is being used to fix spots and cover the slopes as a vegetative soil that grows grass. So it has its benefits.

Higgins explained, "We'll use the material we can now to fix slopes in the summer and then we'll start to move and stockpile the material. When this pile of yard waste is full, I'm going to go right back in the area and start the process again."

Convenience sites make transition to availability fee plan

In the month since the Commissioners approved availability fees for solid waste disposal, reception from the public visiting the convenience sites has been mostly positive.

What they like in particular is that they can drop off their household trash at the convenience site without having to dig in their pockets to pay for it. Instead, residents will pay the fee once annually as part of their tax bill.

The County Commissioners adopted availability fees for the disposal of solid waste as part of its fiscal year 2016 budget. The fees became effective July 1. In turn, the County waived fees for disposing of household trash at the convenience sites and the landfill.

Those who live in a municipality will pay \$55 a year while those who live outside a municipal limit will pay \$85 a year.

Solid Waste Enforcement Officer J.R. Horne has worked to make the transition as easy as possible by posting information at all the convenience sites and responding to questions in person and on the telephone.

"When you come to the recycle center, do what you've been doing," Horne said. "The only difference is you are not going to pay the guard to dispose of your trash because you will have done that with the availability fee."

Horne said the reaction from customers at the convenience sites is positive because they will pay one fee annually rather than pay per visit every time they drop off their trash.

Another positive, according to Horne, is use of the convenience sites has increased and trash accumulation issues on some properties are being resolved.

Residents can bring up to 10 bags of household trash per week to the convenience centers. Horne said most people bring less than 10 bags a week to the convenience sites. "The 10 bag limit per week is to accommodate citizens who may have multiple families within a house. It is a regulation similar to the City where there is a volume of waste you can dispose of in a week. We have to look at the convenience centers the same way."

In addition, out of state residents are no longer permitted to use the convenience sites for the disposal of household trash, Horne said, citing a provision in the contract with Uhwarrie, which disposes of the County's household waste. Out of state residents will still be able to bring recyclables to the convenience sites.

Volunteer firemen water haul training a preparation for reducing ISO rating

Text and photo by Roylin Hammond, EMS

All seven Scotland County fire departments and 35 volunteer firemen participated in Method 2 Water Haul training at Scotland High School the last weekend in June.

The purpose of the training was to practice filling and dumping fire department tankers with water in as efficient and rapid a manner as possible.

Vernon Ward, an NC Department of Insurance, Office of the State Fire Marshal inspector, was present to instruct and guide the training.

This type of joint training is required by the NC Department of Insurance, Office of State Fire Marshal in order to be rated for a water haul system to provide water to a structural fire where a hydrant is not readily available.



Volunteer firemen practice filling and dumping tankers with water.

Six Office of State Fire Marshal inspectors will be in Scotland County September 28 for an entire week to inspect and survey every fire department in the County.

The departments at that time will be tested on their ability to fill and dump their tankers in as rapid and effective a manner as possible to provide water to a working structural fire.

The ISO rating they receive from the September inspection will directly reflect the cost of a homeowner's insurance policy.

As a rule of thumb, for each point the fire department can lower the ISO rating, the homeowner's insurance policy cost will be lowered approximately 10 percent. This is true down to an ISO rating of 6, which is the goal for all the County fire departments.

This will be especially beneficial to homeowners who are in areas of the County that don't have access to fire hydrants and have an ISO rating of 9. If the fire departments are successful in getting the countywide ISO rating down to a 6, homeowners could see as much as a 30 percent reduction in the cost of their homeowner's policies.

This will more than offset the three-cent increase in the fire tax that became effective in the 2015 fiscal year that County residents are required to pay.

All the fire departments, both volunteer and paid, are working hard to accomplish this rating for the citizens they protect.

Medicare 101 presented August 17

Get a basic understanding of the four parts of Medicare and how it all works. Understand your choices for how to get your Medicare coverage. Review and compare your Medicare health and drug plan choices. Find out when you're eligible for Medicare. Learn how to read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN). Learn about programs that can help YOU save money on your medical and drug costs.

All of the above will be the topics discussed at Medicare 101, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday, August 17, at Scotland Place Senior Center, 1210 Turnpike Road.

Sponsored by North Carolina Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), presenters will be Scotland County SHIIP Coordinators Shannon Newton and Doris Ann Donovan. Reservations are requested. Please call 277-2585 by August 14.

Reactivated emergency group focuses on community safety

Scotland County re-formed its local emergency planning committee (LEPC) after nearly 20 years of inactivity. The LEPC is comprised of a community network that would respond to hazard mitigation in the event of a localized emergency event.

EMS Director Roylin Hammond said of the reactivated LEPC, "We want to make sure we know who all the players are and that we understand what's going on in our community in an effort to make it a safer place."

"The LEPC gets to know what's going on in the community and to recognize the potential hazards that are there and plan an exercise to be prepared in case something happens," Hammond explained.

Yancy King, Emergency Coordinator for Area 8, NC Emergency Management, which includes Scotland, Hoke, Anson, Moore, Chatham, Lee and Montgomery counties, said an active LEPC brings numerous benefits to Scotland County.

"It helps to get together, know what other people do and what the capabilities and resources are and it opens the community up to the possibility of funding and grants, which were previously out of reach for lack of an active committee," King said.

"The LEPC focuses on more than just hazard mitigation, since there are homeland security issues that need to be addressed as well as getting people trained for community emergency response teams (CERT)," King added.

"Whenever something happens, you're going to have to rely on each other to start with," King explained. "Knowing what's available in your community and having those things pre-planned is essential because you need at least 72 hours to be self-sufficient. Don't look for assistance in the first 72 hours, the first 72 hours are going to be on you."

David Hesselmeyer, preparedness planner for public health for a five-county region, said, "When we have emergencies or disasters, it's something that takes more than just one agency. We have to make sure we're prepared as a county. We understand what each agency does and we build a good network within the community, too."

Hesselmeyer added, "It's better to join forces on one exercise in order to achieve the objectives that we all have. By doing that it is realistic. It's rare that any one agency would be able to respond to a disaster or emergency and handle it themselves."

"Communities that have active LEPCs are most prepared for an emergency response because there is an interest in exercise, planning and preparing for emergencies," Hesselmeyer explained.

"LEPCs strengthen communication and encourage learning. An LEPC works with emergency management to come up with action plans to address accidents involving hazardous materials passing through."

Hammond discussed the types and amounts of such materials traveling through the County. "We have a lot of things that come on the railroad and on trucks. They probably are our greatest hazards here. We don't have a lot of chemicals that exist in industry here in any volume that would be significant to affect a tremendous amount of the population, but it travels up and down the highway every day. We just need to be prepared for it."

Parks and Rec registrations begin

It's on for soccer, football and cheerleading registration. July 27 through August 1, the cost is \$15. August 3 through August 7, the cost is \$20. Registration can be done at Scotland Place, in Wagram at the Recreation Center or online at www.scotlandcounty.org/parks-and-recreation.aspx.

Avian influenza a concern for State poultry industry

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the poultry industry, the economic impact would be huge.

Howell said quarantine would be the first step if the State was to have a case of avian influenza. "Every farm within a 10 kilometer circle from the infection site would be under surveillance. This disease, although it might be in a county, could immediately affect the entire State." An investigation would follow with samples sent to a laboratory to determine whether it is indeed avian influenza.

The third step, an appraisal, would help the State determine what it's dealing with. Then the birds must be put down through an immediate depopulation to stop the virus. "That's how you stop virus production," Howell said. "You put the birds down using a foam process."

After depopulation, Howell recommended the birds be composted because the high temperature of the compost kills the virus.

Howell said biosecurity will be the number one method to keep avian influenza out of North Carolina. "Don't expose poultry to wild bird feces. Don't wear the boots you wore around the farm into the chicken house. Change boots and clothes."

As of August 15, North Carolina will ban poultry shows and live bird sales including pet bird shows and the sale of chicks at feed stores. The ban will continue through January 15.

Individual sales will still be allowed. Sales where people and birds come together are banned. There are no restrictions on selling eggs at this time.

"We'll have no birds of any kind at the State fair or any county fairs," Howell explained. "That could be a point of contact for farmers as well as the community. We're trying to eliminate as many things as we can and do it in a smart way."

North Carolina produced \$2.8 billion in broiler chickens, which were raised and sold for meat production, in 2012.



Photo from www.ncagr.gov/avianflu

Extra Help Program set

The Extra Help Program or the Low-Income Subsidy Program (LIS) will be held 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Monday, August 24, at Scotland Place, 1210 Turnpike Road.

LIS helps qualified Medicare beneficiaries pay for their Medicare prescription drug program costs, such as premiums, deductibles and coinsurance.

Any level of assistance provides elimination of a Part D coverage gap (donut hole), the opportunity to change Prescription Drug Plans at any time, a reduced Part D deductible, a reduced Part D copay and a reduced cost of the drugs and elimination of a Late Enrollment Penalty if, when you apply for LIS, you haven't already signed up for a Part D plan.