

MARCH 2016



Scotland County, NC

A newsletter for the Scotland County community

Retirement of K9 Lola recognized with ceremony

by Rebecca Riggs, Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office held the first-ever K9 ceremony to recognize K9 Lola on her retirement. Lola came to this country in 2006 from the Netherlands. She was purchased by the Sheriff's Office from Customized K9 Training in Fort Mill, SC.

Lola was purchased as a 'green dog,' which means she was trained in some basic commands but needed additional training in specific areas where she would be utilized.

K9 Lola and Lt. Danny McClellan of C Shift in the Patrol Division trained in a K9 Narcotics Detection class with Customized K9 Training. Upon completing the course, McClellan spent countless hours daily for several months training K9 Lola in Narcotics Detection.

Over time both trained in tracking, article search, suspect building searches, narcotics searches, obedience and K9 bite work and handler protection. K9 Lola excelled in all areas of training. She and her handler earned National Certification in all areas. K9 Lola accumulated more than 1,500 hours of documented training hours.

K9 Lola participated in numerous deployments to track fleeing suspects where she aided in the location and apprehension of suspects. K9 Lola is credited in aiding in the location and seizure of illegal narcotics during deployments in countless Narcotics Search Warrant operations and vehicle searches. K9 Lola was utilized by other agencies requesting assistance in tracking and narcotic operations.

K9 Lola developed hip joint problems in her last year of service. Although this did not deter her drive and determination, it did begin to affect her stamina. Due to hip problems and K9 Lola's age of 10 years, it was decided that it was time for her to retire.

"K9 Lola is to be commended for her years of faithful service



Lt. Danny McClellan escorts K9 Lola to her retirement ceremony.

see Lola, page 4

Contractors get code updates

The Inspections Department invited contractors to workshops where they would receive updates on all the codes.

"Since the new electrical code is effective April 1, I thought it would be a good idea to invite all contractors — plumbing, mechanical, electrical and general — to update session," explained Inspections Director Thomas Milligan.

Throughout March Milligan held six sessions, each lasting two hours. For those contractors who did not attend, Milligan's department will email the updated information to them.

Milligan said in the past year there were more than 300 electrical code changes alone. Scotland County inspectors stay current on all the changes by attending continuing education classes every year, a total of six hours in each trade.

"We decided this would be a good service to provide to the contractors who serve our County," Milligan said. "This helps the Inspections Department build customer relations and a good working relationship with all the contractors. This was a good opportunity to bring them in and review all the updates."

Milligan said the update sessions have been well-received, and there is much more on the agenda than a review of updates. Inspections employees are introduced and the permitting process is reviewed.

"I discuss our goals, which include a website update so applications can be filled out and permits paid for online," said Milligan. "I ask them to fill out a survey telling us how we can better serve and help them."

The sessions included a question and answer period. "We discussed any issues contractors have in the field so we could all get on the same page and contractors could get the same information at one time."

Based on the success of the program so far, Milligan said, "My goal is to get contractors together at least once a year for code

see Code, page 4

Make your opinion known for a health needs assessment

by Kathie Cox, Health

A Community Health Needs Assessment is performed every three years to gain an understanding of the health, concerns and health care systems of the community. The assessment will provide direction and focus for Scotland Health Care System, Scotland County Health Department and other community agencies and organizations in Scotland County. The assessment will serve as a basis for improving and promoting the health of Scotland County residents.

As a Scotland County resident, you can help Scotland County Health Department and Scotland Health Care System with this very important 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment by completing the confidential and short five to seven-minute survey. Thank you in advance for your valuable time. Your participation is appreciated and your answers are important.

You may also return the completed survey to Scotland Health Care System (front desk) at 500 Lauchwood Drive Laurinburg, NC 28352 or Scotland County Health Department (registration desk), 1405 West Boulevard, Laurinburg, NC 28353.

Should you prefer to submit the survey online you may do so at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PQCQFH3>.

Disc golf sponsorships will help revive the course, attract players

The disc golf course at the James L. Morgan Recreation Complex is about to be revived thanks to the efforts of Assistant Athletic Supervisor Chris Hopper and the newly formed Scotland County Disc Golf Association.

The group intends to transform the 18-hole course that has fallen into disrepair into a high quality disc golf course that will attract players from the region to enjoy an affordable leisure activity.

The project gained momentum when the Board of Commissioners approved the group's request to seek sponsorship for each of the 18 holes in the course.

For \$250 a local business in the community would have their name on the sign at the beginning of the hole they choose to sponsor. "What they will get is the name of the business on the hole as the sponsor. That will cover the cost of the signs and the pole on which the sign is mounted," Hopper said.

"The rest of the costs are specifically for improving the quality of the course," Hopper said, "This is a great way to spread awareness of the improvements that have been made, and it will bring a new activity to the community. We eventually hope to host tournaments here."

Hopper said, "As far as building the course, the majority of the costs are a one-time occurrence. First, we need signage to direct players throughout the course of play. The course, as well as most of the players, will be new so it will be imperative to provide direction. The signage will include hole number, distance and general layout."

Once signage is in place, concrete tee boxes will be installed that designate the starting point for each hole. "This is where the majority of the costs will occur," Hopper said.

"The baskets have already been replaced," Hopper said. "Sponsorships will immediately impact the quality of our disc golf course and promote the local businesses in Scotland County. It is a win-win situation for everyone. With the exception of the initial cost of buying discs, this is a low cost sport."

Disc golf is very similar to actual golf. "Instead of playing with a golf ball and clubs, you have a disc (similar to a small Frisbee), which you throw and it must come to rest inside the basket," Hopper explained. "There is a following for the sport, especially in this region."

Scotland County Parks and Recreation Foundation will handle the donations, which will be tax deductible.

Historic Properties hosts Civil War Reenactment April 9

A Civil War Reenactment is coming to Scotland County April 9. The free event will be held 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the John Blue House and Grounds.

The day will feature artillery fire on the hour, infantry and artillery skirmishes, cavalry, youth enlistment, training and certification and appearances and book signings by historians and authors Karen Stokes and Paul C. Graham.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase, and the John Blue House, the Indian Museum of the Carolinas and the Museum of Agriculture and History will also be open free of charge. The event is sponsored by the Scotland County Historic Properties Commission.

The April birthday list

4 Daniel McClellan (Jail); 5 Elizabeth Barton (Health); 6 Shekesha McPhatter (DSS); 7 Kai Pickett (DSS); 9 Berta Adams (Jail); 10 Jason Butler (Sheriff); 12 Michael Alford (Parks and Recreation) and Tiffany Elliott (DSS); 13 Danilo Dirico (EMS); 14 Kisse Phy (EMS) and William Edge (E911 Center); 15 Nicole Grant (DSS); 16 Erica Hall (Health), Tammy Cole (DSS) and Alan Stewart (Parks and Recreation); 18 April Snead (DSS); 20 Sandra McNeil (DSS) and Marion Hollingsworth (Transportation); 21 Patricia Campbell (Public Buildings) and Michael Woods (Sheriff); 22 Annie Clymer (Library); 23 Roger Alford (Sheriff); 24 April Sessoms (DSS) and Marty Pate (Tax); 25 Sandra Miller (Jail); 27 Tina Clark (Health); 28 Sandy McCrimmon (Transportation) and Sharon English (Cooperative Extension); 29 Debra Sandlin (EMS).

Post Scripts

The following individuals joined Scotland County departments between January 16 and February 15:

James Monroe and **Kelly Jacobs**, Sheriff; **Mary Bender**, DSS; **Christopher Duffel**, part-time with EMS and **Darleaner Deese**, part-time with Transportation. **Sheriff Ralph Kersey** was one of 27 sheriffs from across the State who graduated from the Sheriffs' Leadership Institute March 11. The Sheriffs' Leadership Institute was sponsored by the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association and partially funded through a grant from the Governor's Crime Commission. The Sheriffs' Leadership Institute consists of four one-week training programs conducted over a period of two years. The first two weeks were designed to provide specific technical skills necessary to assume the Office of Sheriff. The second

two weeks were designed to further their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the leadership and management of the sheriff's office. The Institute is a national model that provides leadership and technical training, specifically designed for sheriffs.



Disc golf course baskets have been replaced. Photo by Mike McGirt, Public Buildings

Our condolences to ...

The family of **Elmer Kottyan**, the County's first computer programmer who retired in 1999. Kottyan passed away February 29.

Team up for Litter Sweep

2016 Spring Litter Sweep is April 4 to 9. Vests, gloves and trash bags are available at the Chamber of Commerce, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, 606 Atkinson Street.

Cash prize for King of the Mountain is \$200 for the team that picks up the most litter. Second place prize is \$100. There will be various small prizes for the first 100 people who sign-up to participate.

New name planned for John Blue grounds

In a move to extend its appeal to a larger region and attract a greater number of visitors, the John Blue grounds and property will be renamed the North Carolina Rural Heritage Center.

"We've been working with the Tourism Development Authority since November on how to better present the John Blue Complex," said Historic Properties Commission Chairman Lee Gaunt.

After many weeks of much discussion the Commission agreed to rename the John Blue Complex the North Carolina Rural Heritage Center.

To highlight what's available at the complex, there are four sub-categories — the John Blue House and Heritage Village, which includes the three cabins, the pastor's study, corn crib, gin and bailer, the Old Timey Store and the tobacco barn.

Across the street in what was once the John Blue manufacturing facility there are the Indian Museum of the Carolinas, with an extensive display of arrowheads among other Indian artifacts, and the Museum of Agriculture and History, formerly known as the Scotland County Museum.

"This museum has more than just Scotland County items," Gaunt said. "Most of the items would be of interest to anyone who enjoys agricultural and American history."

Gaunt added that a new website will be up and running in the next few months that will reflect the name change and all that is featured at the complex.

Some school facilities available for recreation

A shared use agreement between the County and the Schools will make the Covington Street Elementary playground and Spring Hill Middle School ballfields available for public use.

Likewise, the Tennis Center will be made available for use by the schools.

County Manager Kevin Patterson said, "Opening up Covington Street as a community playground and Spring Hill ballfields to the general public is done with the intention of increasing physical activity."

Patterson said past shared use agreements required approval by both boards if there was an amendment to the document. "With this modification it allows staff to add facilities to the agreement without having to get approval from both boards," Patterson said.

The high school, however, is specifically carved out of the agreement primarily because its scheduling is different from that of other school facilities. Inside building activities are not included in the agreement at this time.

Commissioner Bob Davis asked that at some point in the future Laurel Hill Elementary and Carver Middle schools be incorporated into the agreement as points of recreation for the Laurel Hill community.

Education key to economic recovery

Four economic measures in a recent analysis of all 3,069 counties in the United States included home values, job growth, unemployment rates and GDP. Scotland County currently met one of the four, that of home values.

That's a positive because 24 percent of counties have not gotten back to where they were in 2008 in any of the categories. 14 percent of counties in the United State recovered in all four categories.

County Manager Kevin Patterson shared the information as part of the annual State of the County event hosted by the Chamber of Commerce.

The unemployment rate is .8 percent higher than it was in 2008, Patterson said. "We actually have recovered more and recovered faster than a lot of counties in the country."

Patterson said, "Every year for the past five years we have had an expansion or a new industry sited in Scotland County. That is significant because some of our neighboring counties in the last five years have gone two or three years without an announcement."

Labor force was another statistic Patterson referenced. Statewide 11 percent of the labor force is in industry while in Scotland County it's 17 percent. "Our industrial base is entirely advanced manufacturing. We have people who operate multi-million dollar machinery here that requires the skills."

Patterson said the County still works to attract advanced manufacturing as well as those industries that would hire workers who don't have advanced manufacturing skills.

Patterson explained the County is not unique when it comes to rural poverty. "This is not 'We're poor old Scotland County, we're unique' kind of thing. This is a national issue that is far from over. This has been a growing issue and it's not just about the recession. It's been there for years, and it will take years to overcome."

On the local level there is very little a municipal or county government can do. They can't require an increase in minimum wage or compel people to actually learn in school if they have no desire to do so. "Their real authority is limited."

Patterson said local governments can work with school systems to promote education, which can lead to better-than-average paying jobs. "The fastest way to get out of poverty is to have knowledge and the skillset that people are willing to pay you for."

Counties and municipalities also can create an environment where retail and industrial businesses can thrive. "Make sure the environment is adequate for business whether it's in zoning or making sure there are no unnecessary local regulations," Patterson explained.

"Get out of the way as much as possible and make sure we have the assets to entice businesses. Make sure we have the land. Make sure we have utilities with transportation available."

Patterson reported that Cascades will donate about 400 acres of land to the County, which would include the water and wastewater treatment plant. The parcel will be part of Duke Energy's industrial development program. The company will bring in engineers who will help the County conduct the necessary assessments to prime the site for industrial recruitment.

"That means nationally recognized experts will facilitate the County in making another premiere property that can be developed." Patterson said the seven-million-gallon a day water/wastewater treatment on the property is exceptionally unique in North Carolina and in the southeastern United States and will serve as an asset in industrial recruitment.

"The other thing industry looks for is labor force," Patterson said. "The industry wants to know there are people who can actually fill the jobs and do the work. Industry will pay a good wage if you have the assets, the skills and the knowledge to actually give the value for it. Nobody pays \$20 an hour for manual labor. Those types of jobs have gone from the United States, and they are never coming back."

Pittenger pledges support for County

U.S. Representative Robert Pittenger visited officials here to gauge concerns from a district he might be representing in the coming year.

Scotland County currently is in the 8th Congressional District represented by Congressman Richard Hudson.

However, new maps drawn by the the General Assembly place Scotland County in Pittenger's 9th District along with Union, Anson, Richmond and Robeson counties, the southeastern portion of Mecklenburg County and parts of Bladen and Cumberland counties. The new maps await approval from a federal panel.

Over lunch at the Small Business Innovation Center, the 30 elected officials, business and industry representatives voiced concerns about Scotland County and rural counties in particular, which they feel are neglected at the federal level.

Access to mental health services in rural areas, particularly in the public schools and in the detention center was discussed.

Officials asked that more focus be placed on entrepreneurship and small businesses, making the startup process easier and accessible.

Pittenger was asked to keep rural communities in mind when it comes to industrial recruitment and workforce development.

The group discussed the need for for better treatment of senior citizens and veterans in accessing essential services, regulatory relief for hospitals and assistance in accelerating graduation and certification for community college students by making PELL grants available for summer semesters.

Pittenger assured officials he would be a good partner and committed to Scotland County should he be its representative in Congress.

River festival is May 14

The traditional homemade raft race is just one highlight of the 2016 Chalk Banks Challenge and River Festival Saturday, May 14.

There will be raft, canoe and kayak races, a 5K trail run, games for kids, inflatables, train rides, canoe rides, vendors and more.

The homemade raft race will be divided into two classes for single person and group (two people or more). All rafts must be homemade and not motorized in any way.

5K trail run registration begins at 8 a.m., canoe and kayak registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and raft and runner registration begins at 10 a.m.

Homemade raft races are at 11:30 a.m. At 12:30 p.m. the Kid's Olympics begins and includes a wet t-shirt relay and hollering contest.

New this year is the Scotland County Elementary School Cross-Country Championship one-mile race.



The beauty of it all!

EMS Assistant Director Robert Sampson (lower left), Detention Officer Clinton Gooselin (with Sheriff Ralph Kersey lower right) and Parks and Recreation Athletic Director Al Blades (left) were among the 10 male contestants who exposed their inner glamour at the 2016 Womanless Beauty Pageant. The event raised money for United Way of Scotland County.

Other contestants included Josh Coble, City of Laurinburg network administrator; Chris Young, City of Laurinburg Police Department; Richard Bailey, Scotland High football coach; Jerry Riggins, Jr., owner of Jerry's Deli; Tyris Jones, stotyeller/chef; Beacham McDougald, McDougald Funeral Home; and Eric Brown, Service Thread production supervisor.

Blades was recognized for bringing in the largest amount in tips while Young was named first runner up and Jones was crowned Queen.



K9 Lola receives retirement honors

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to the community, Sheriff's Office and her handler, Lt. Danny McClellan," said Sheriff Ralph Kersey. "It is important that our handlers are selected based on the desire to take on the responsibility of their new friend and work partner and to love, care and train as though it was one of their own family members." K9 Lola is now retired to her handler's home and is already a member of the McClellan family.

Kersey then welcomed Lt. K9 Eli to the Sheriff's Office K9 Unit with his handler, Sgt. Miles Mack. Kersey and Mack thanked Smithfield Hog Production West Division and Lowes Home Improvement for their generous contributions to fully purchase Lt. K9 Eli. Dr. Brian Schillig of Academy Animal Hospital was thanked for the special care he has given the K9s.

Also in attendance at the retirement reception were Deputy Mikey Woods and Sgt. Julio, Sgt. Brandon Cribb and Lt. K9 Cido, Sgt. Will McIlwain and Lt. K9 Igor, Deputy BJ Knight and Sgt. K9 Bob.

Inspections hosts code update classes

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changes updates and to get together for a few hours away from the job sites where any issues they might have can be discussed."

Milligan said the department has already initiated a time-saving program for contractors. "Now when we do an inspection, we have the ability to email the actual results of the inspection to the contractor right from the job site. That means the contractor won't have to wait for the inspectors to get back to the office or won't have to go out to the site to check their inspection box to see if it passed or failed. They can get the results immediately."