

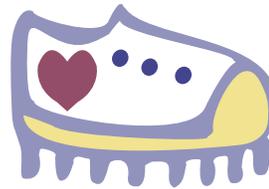


Connection

VOLUME II, ISSUE VII

JULY 2005

HeartWalk 2005 Campaign Underway



Cumberland County supports the American Heart Association by participating in the Heart Walk and working with the Sandhills Chapter of the American Heart Association. This year, the Heart Walk will take place on Saturday, October 1.

From now until that date, Cumberland County employees who are Team Leaders in the county's various departments will be soliciting contributions from their co-workers and planning departmental fundraisers. The goal this year is \$25,000, and every effort will be made to meet the goal. Last year, Cumberland County exceeded the goal and we'll try to do that again this year.

So plan to contribute when your department's Team Leader approaches you. And come on out on October 1 with your colleagues to enjoy a brisk walk in the early autumn sunshine!

When the Cumberland County Board of Commissioners adopted the FY2006 budget on June 6, they demonstrated how much the Board values the work of all county employees. The budget includes a 5% Cost of Living Allowance for all full-time employees. Employees averaging 20 hours per week or more will receive a pro-rated share of the increase.

The commissioners also initiated a county contribution of 1% to employees' 401K accounts that requires no match by the employee. Eligibility includes all employees who are in the State Retirement System.

The COLA and 401K contribution, though effective with the first pay period in July, may not show up in employee paychecks until later in the month. The Payroll Division has a large volume of work to do with changing deductions for health care insurance in the new fiscal year.

This significant financial acknowledgement of county employees' worth is possible because of careful and conservative financial management of the county's revenues and expenditures. As a county employee, be grateful and keep on doing the great work you do! (See the accompanying article for info on briefings regarding the 401K benefit.)

The *Connection* Is Now An Electronic One!

If you are reading this article, you've probably already realized that the bi-monthly employee newsletter, *The Connection*, is being delivered electronically to employees with a county e-mail address. This method, as you can see, permits the newsletter to be produced using color. It can be printed out, so if you have people in your department who don't have a county e-mail address, print one for them. Even if it is printed in black and white, it still has info that may be of value to a county employee.

Many other counties are using the electronic method to deliver newsletters to employees. Think of the trees being saved! Actually, a limited number of paper copies are being produced for those employees who are so mobile they don't use a

computer in their daily duties or have an e-mail address. But still, the savings are worthwhile.

Let me know if you have any other suggestions on how to make *The Connection* more helpful to you.

- Sara
VanderClute,
Public
Information
Director

The Education and Enrollment Manager for NC 401(k) Plan will be in Cumberland County early in July to answer any questions employees may have about the Plan.

Tuesday, July 5 8 am to 5 pm
Mental Health Bradford Building Auditorium
Wednesday, July 6 8 am to 5 pm
Dep't of Social Services, Room D
Thursday, July 7
Friday, July 8 8 am to 5 pm
Courthouse Room 119
Monday, July 11 9 am to 5 pm
Main Library Pate Room
Tuesday, July 12 8 am to 5 pm
Department of Social Services Room D
**To schedule a one-on-one meeting,
call (919) 522-5514.**

COUNTY MANAGER'S MESSAGE

Embarking On Fiscal Year 2006

Somehow, the first of July seems like the start of a new year and for those of us in county government, indeed it is. For us, the new fiscal year (FY06) begins on July 1. Like the start of a brand new calendar year, it gives us the opportunity to pause and commit to making this year a better one.

As employees, you will see in one of your earliest paychecks the results of factors that influence the budget upon which all our decisions must be based. I am pleased the Board of Commissioners approved a 5% salary increase in this budget, as well as the newly-initiated county contribution of 1% of salary to 401ks for employees. You may also notice higher healthcare premiums, since the county has gone to a single plan beginning 1 July 2005.

I encourage all employees to maximize the opportunity of saving for retirement through the 401K program. The new county policy means that not only will you have, in retirement, the money you've saved, but an amount that the county has contributed to that savings account. It's a good deal, and a real benefit.

You may think I'm repeating myself, but we must do something about our soaring healthcare costs. In the next few months, we will be taking steps to help employees be healthier and to identify ways in which costs can be minimized, both for the employee and for the county. This is an imperative; we cannot sustain the rate of increase in healthcare costs.

I encourage each of you to have a productive, safe and happy summer. Read your newsletters to learn more about how Cumberland County government will be moving forward in the coming months.



"Tobacco Free"

NEW, FREE Program!

Are you thinking about quitting smoking or using tobacco? Quitting can be hard, but having a good game plan can help make it easier.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC) has a new Tobacco Free program to help members who want to kick their tobacco habit. The program will help you outline a successful quitting strategy AND get the information and support you need to make it work.

Enroll in the Tobacco Free program and you'll have access to the following **FREE** resources:

- **Quit kit** - Tools and materials designed to help you quit. Includes tips on setting a quit date, advice on coping with cravings and weight gain and information about medications that may help you quit.
- **Personal support** - Call a toll-free support line or instant message a counselor for one-on-one assistance.

Don't delay. Take the first step towards quitting tobacco. Call 1-800-811-8324 or visit bcbnsnc.com today to enroll or learn more about the Tobacco Free program.

If You Need Help, Don't Overlook This Benefit!

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit for Cumberland County employees. It can help you and your family members address personal or work-related concerns; the professional EAP staff can work with you to solve life's challenges. Among the issues you can seek help with are childrearing and marital problems, mental health concerns, substance abuse issues and others.

All information that you share with your EAP professional is confidential, and your supervisor doesn't need to know you have used the program. To initiate the assistance of the Employee Assistance Program, call 222-6157. Help is just a phone call away.



Fancy Fun Flip Flops

Carol St. Louis, Administrative Support in Finance, has moved on from her wintertime hobby of knitting. Now she's crocheting! Here in the picture you will see the enhanced flip-flops Carol is making for friends and family. Amazing

how a plain pair of flip-flops become fashion accessories, isn't it, with the fluffy crocheted enhancements. Carol enjoys life immensely and wants everyone to have a fun and safe summer!

County Employee Kudos



Great County Employees Doing Great Things

- Andy Miller, the Mental Health Center's TASC Program Coordinator, has been reappointed to the NC State Criminal Justice Partnership Advisory Board for a second three-year term by Governor Easley. Mr. Miller currently chairs the board.
- The Workforce Development Center is on a roll! They were presented a Group Specialized Customer Service Award for their Transition Services Project by the International Association of Workforce Professionals. And the American Legion presented Workforce Development an award for the 3d consecutive year acknowledging the Senior Aides program.
- Deputy County Manager Juanita Pilgrim participated in the 3d Annual NC State Symposium, "The Engaged University" earlier this spring. Ms. Pilgrim led a discussion on "Innovative Reciprocation," as it relates to integrating the work of the University with the objectives of North Carolina communities.
- Autrice Taylor of the Cumberland County Planning & Inspection Department, GIS Section, has earned her certification as a GIS professional.
- Amy Cannon, Assistant County Manager/Finance Director, accepted on behalf of the County the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Fiscal Year 2004. This award is made annually by the Government Finance Officers Association, and Cumberland County is a perpetual honoree.

"Be Aware of Our Air Week"

This year we launched the beginning of ozone season, May 1-7, 2005 with the second annual "Be Aware Of Our Air Week" campaign. We kicked off the event with a press conference at Cross Creek Park on April 22, 2005. During the week of May 1-7, 2005, we had participants from local organization as well as the public complete a clean air diary. The diary challenged individuals to contribute to cleaner air by taking part in simple everyday activities, such as trip chaining, carpooling and filling their gas tanks in the evening. The diary awarded points for each activity and those with the most points competed for prizes. At the conclusion of the "Be Aware of Our Air Week" campaign we had over 500 participants including Fort Bragg. Our largest participation was from Cumberland County employees. The following employees were awarded 1/2 days off: Cathy Adams, Tax Administration; Janice Nettles, Tax Administration; Monica Gross, Tax Administration; Anna Ray, Library; and Susan Dieck, Library.

The following employees were awarded various other prizes, which included free dinners and/or gift certificates: Felsesia Buczynski, Tax Administration; Patty Hackworth, Tax Administration; Kathy Pittman, Tax Administration; Desire D. Mings, Tax Administration; Denise Taylor, Tax Administration

Winette Van, Library; Susan Parrish, Library; Angela F. Brown-Brunson, Tax Administration; and Ginger Sessoms, Library. Thank you and Congratulations to all the participants and winners of the "Be Aware of Our Air Week" campaign.

Ilse Spaulding in Risk Management shares with us some tips on how to avoid polluting our air. Her guidance is right in step with the Air Quality Stakeholders committee monitoring Cumberland County's attainment of the EPA's air quality standards. Here's one small thing to be aware of in your own habits that can affect our air quality.

Topping off your gas tank is bad for the environment *and* your wallet!

Topping off the gas tank results in you paying for gasoline that is actually being fed back into the station's tanks. In areas of ozone non-attainment, gas station pumps are equipped with vapor recovery systems that feed back gas vapors into their tanks to prevent the vapors from escaping into the air.

You need extra room in your gas tank to allow gasoline to expand. If you top off your tank, the extra gas may evaporate into your vehicle's vapor collection system.

So for your sake and the sake of our air quality, don't top off your gas tank.

For additional information please contact:

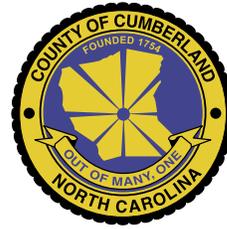
Janique Evans, Air Quality Coordinator 910-678-7614

James Martin, County Manager
County Manager's Office
117 Dick Street
Courthouse
Suite 512
Fayetteville, NC 28301
Phone: 910-678-7723
Fax: 910-678-7717
Email: jmartin@co.cumberland.nc.us

VISIT US ON THE WEB

**HTTP://
WWW.CO.CUMBERLAND.NC.US/**

***Cumberland
County
Government...
Working for you!***



Cumberland County
NORTH CAROLINA

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Cumberland County Government to assure all our citizens a better quality of life by providing for the public safety, public health, quality education, clean environment and economic development while being fiscally responsible.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision for Cumberland County is that it be characterized by progressive leadership that provides for a prosperous, affordable, safe, and culturally inviting community.



**Coming Up
@The Crown Center**



- Enjoy the inspiration play, **"Girl He Ain't Worth It"** July 14, 7:30 PM and July 15th, 8:00 PM, Crown Theatre

- For the latest in event information, become a Crown *Insider*! Just go to www.crowncoliseum.com

and click on the Crown *Insider* logo. Be the first to know what's happening at the Crown!



- As you enjoy your summer, we're working hard at the Crown Center to make the 2005 – 2006 season of **Broadway's Best** the most exciting ever! We open the season with the visually stunning production of **Miss Saigon** on November 1st. Our Broadway's Best series will be one you won't want to miss!