CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Connection

VOLUME III, ISSUE V SEPTEMBER 2006

Jennifer shoes up for her lunch-time walk, as part of her commitment to Wellness.

County's Wellness Plan Is Working For Her!

This has been quite a year for Jennifer Moore, Financial Assistant II in the Finance Department. She began the year making resolutions, as we all do, and in April she got married in Las Vegas. But it was something that happened in between, the February Wellness Fair that launched her on the path to health and happiness.

Jennifer Moore has, since February, lost 36 pounds and she's convinced that her blood pressure and cholesterol levels will be lower when she has them measured again at the August Health Fair. Jennifer is only 28 years old, so she was quite surprised to learn at the first Health Fair that she had elevated blood pressure and high cholesterol levels.

"I was surprised and concerned," she says. "Both my parents had those symptoms, and they both had heart health issues."

Jennnifer immediately went to work developing her own plan to lose weight and gain fitness. The county's permission to add 1/2 hour on to the lunch hour thrice weekly if the time is used to exercise has helped Jennifer make remarkable progress. First, she gets up every morning at 6 a.m. and takes a mile and a half walk on her own. Then, at lunchtime, she and her equally committed pal from Human Resources, Laura Blackley, take a mile and a half walk. In the evenings, the duo will often meet to take a hike on the inviting Cape Fear Trail. And she also takes a regular yoga class. Now that's commitment!

> ***"Jennifer is a perfect example of what the County Wellness plan can do for all of us, if we just make the commitment."***
>
> *Amy Cannon, Asst. County Manager*

She has also been following a lower-calorie diet, from which she occasionally takes a break. But she believes that the combination of the diet and the exercise is what has helped her achieve success.

Jennifer speaks candidly about how to deal with exercising in the middle-of-the-day heat she encounters. It can be done, she says.

"Well, I'm lucky in that I don't perspire much, and I change into different clothes before I take the walk," she says. "Then, after lunch, I use the deodorant I've brought along and change back into my work clothes. I have a little fan in my office that cools me down real quick."

Jennifer is well on her way to achieving an ideal weight and a healthier body. She's grateful for the opportunity that Cumberland County Government, her employer, has provided for her and for all the employees who work for the county. Jennifer Moore is living proof that becoming healthy can make you happy!

County Manager's Message

We are soon entering another transition, from summer into fall. We welcome the cooler temperatures, but this is also the very time we need to be most alert to the danger of hurricanes. The season actually began in June, but September and October can be the most active time of the season. Follow the advice of the experts and stock up on canned food, bottled water, candles, batteries and all the things that you might need to get through a period of high winds, flooding and loss of power. And keep on eye on the forecasts so you'll know what to expect. Knowing that a storm is headed our way can be the best way to minimize the damage. Do what you can to prepare.

Later this month, the NC Association of County Commissioners will meet in Winston-Salem. Next year, we here in Cumberland County will be the hosts and early in 2007 we'll begin to plan intensively for that opportunity. But this year, in Winston-Salem, one of our county departments is being honored with the Ketner Award. This award is going to Jan Albert, Karen Hall and David Matthews of the Solid Waste Department. The award, which rewards increasing efficiency in county operations, was for their work in Turning Mulch Into Money. This initiative involves selling mulch material to regional industry as fuel for boilers and it brings significant revenue into Cumberland County. I commend these individuals, the Director of their department, Bobby Howard, and every employee who gives thought to finding ways to increase efficiency and save taxpayer dollars. Next year, let's see if one of our other departments can duplicate this achievement!

A Most Generous Donation

American Heart Association®
Learn and Live.

Cumberland County Employees are generous in many ways, but one of the most valuable ways we contribute is through the blood donor program. The blood collected quarterly by the Bloodmobile staff from Cape Fear Valley's Blood Donor Center literally saves lives. Stringent standards imposed by the government has diminished the pool of potential blood donors, even as the need for blood donations increases.

The next blood drive to be held at the courthouse will take place on November 1, 2006 between 1 and 4 p.m. You can call Sara VanderClute, Public Information Director, at 437-1921 to make a specific 15-minute appointment for that day. The holiday season will begin in November and the blood you donate could mean the gift of life for someone in our community.

Former county employee Nicole Dickens, now employed by the court system, was the first donor at the blood drive in August. She even brought along one of her new colleagues, Brian, to be a donor!

The winners of the raffle fundraiser for the American Heart Association in June were:

$500	*Tom Sanders (husband of Veterans Affairs' Sharon Sanders)*
$400	*Jennifer Robinson, DSS*
$300	*Virna Raymond Health Dept.*
$200	*Vanessa Newton, DSS*
$100	*Erica Bullard-Walker, DSS*

The American Heart Association was presented $7,000 as a result of this fundraising campaign among county employees.

American Heart Association®
Learn and Live.

THANK YOU FOR HAVING A HEART!

County Employee Kudos

Great County Employees Doing Great Things

Tax Administration

Debbie Ragan Todd, CPA, Tax Audit Supervisor in the Tax Administration Department since July 2003, recently successfully completed a series of rigorous tests required to earn her CPA certification from the North Carolina State Board of Certified Public Accountants.

Ms. Todd has worked in Tax Administration since July of 1996, starting as a Collection Clerk I. She continues to be a huge asset to the department as she oversees the Audit Section. Some of her duties include auditing local business accounts for compliance with the NC General Statutes for listing of assets for taxation, discovering businesses that have not listed assets as required by statute, and overseeing the Food & Beverage, Room Occupancy, and Gross Rental Receipts programs.

Many kudos and congratulations from her colleagues for completing this milestone in her career!

Administration

At the recent National Association of Counties convention in Chicago, officials from Cumberland County accepted awards made earlier this year by the National Association of County Information Officers. Cumberland County submitted three winning entries. *The Connection*, this very employee newsletter, won a designation of Excellence, as did a speech made by Commissioner Henley to the Cumberland County Coordinating Council on Older Adults. Winning a Superior designation was the logo designed by **Angie Cunningham**, Print Shop Supervisor, that was used in the "Kiss A Pig" event associated with the 2005 American Heart Association fundraiser among county employees.

Animal Control

Animal Control is proud to announce that Cruelty Investigator **Charles Steinman** has been promoted to Operations Supervisor, and that Officer **Tony Seay** has been promoted to Cruelty Investigator. Congratulations to each of them!

Charlie joined the Animal Control team in June, 2002 as an Animal Control Officer. His insatiable thirst for knowledge and outstanding teamwork contributed to his promotion to Cruelty Investigator in June 2003. Once again these same attributes were a key element in his selection as the Operations Supervisor in July 2006. We are proud to add Charlie to the management team in Animal Control.

Tony is also an incredible asset to our department and we look forward to his contributions as our new Cruelty Investigator.

Cooperative Extension

Cumberland County 4-H Council President **Benny Smith** was honored by President Bush on July 4 with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. The 4-H program in Cumberland County is awesome, providing many diverse opportunities for young people in our community. The range of experiences spans from beekeeping to studying the dynamics of flight to learning the responsible use of a rifle.

Day Reporting Center

The **students in the Day Reporting Center's GED program** participated in the 2d Annual Dunk Fan basketball tournament on August 5 at Northwood Temple Academy. This tournament was sponsored by the Academy's Brian Colletti Memorial Endowment Fund. The DRC's team was called Wins Breeze and they came in second place, winning four of six games! Our players included our FTCC instructor Bryan Smith, students Orion Boomer, Jonathon Hamilton, Ryan Lanoue, Joshua Owen, and Shadad Walker. We are very proud of their accomplishment!

In Case You're Injured On The Job

Occupational Health Relocates To Melrose

Occupational Health Services of Cape Fear Valley Health System has **relocated to 3318 Melrose Road, effective August 28.** The phone numbers remain 609-6721 and 609-7639.

CAPE FEAR VALLEY
TRANSFORMING HEALTHCARE

What's The 411?

We all know that slogging through the local phone book can be a hassle when you are in a hurry to find a phone number. However, turning to the easier alternative by calling the information number, 411, is an expensive choice. Last billing period, the county paid more than $400 in charges for employees who used their phone to obtain a phone number from an operator or automated service. Multiply that by 12 billing periods and you can see that the annual cost is significant.

Employees are cautioned to be judicious when using the 411 service – make sure you can't obtain the number from another source, make certain it's work-related, and only if absolutely necessary. Be as careful with the taxpayer's dollars as you are with your own!

Another interesting tidbit – county employees, when calling another county department, should always use the four-digit extension. When calling another department by dialing 9 and then the 7-digit number, you are tying up a county phone line and rendering it unavailable to citizens. Any county office number beginning with the prefixes 321, 677, 678, 223, 323, 433, 437, 438, or 672 can be dialed with just the four-digit suffix.

So use the phone book, dial by extension, and if you have other questions about how to use our phone system effectively and efficiently, contact Danela Johnson in the Communications Center at 7712.

Knitting and Purling and Crochet, Too!

They're at it again, those crafty ladies in the Cumberland County Finance office. Carol St. Louis and Jerri Freeman have embarked on another creative hobby. You may remember the knitted scarves craze that Carol St. Louis launched last year, or maybe the prettily decorated flip-flops. Well, now Carol is busily knitting colorful mittens for the coming winter, and Jerry Freeman is crocheting intricate lacy doilies, to decorate her own home and to give as gifts. Carol is learning to crochet, too, but finds counting the tiny stitches just a bit tedious.

Both Carol and Jerri generously share their skills and techniques, and would be happy to discuss their latest crafts.

Do You Even *Know* What's Getting You Down?

We encounter many sources of stress in our lives, but in the summer edition of EAP Digest, a survey indicates that there are two stressors that lead the pack: money and work.

Fifty-nine percent of those surveyed say money problems are the greatest source of stress, and the same percentage (59%) say that work is. Following on the heels of those two are health problems affecting parents (53%); their own health concerns, (50%); and the nightly news or the state of the world today is also a stressor for many (50%).

If a situation at work is troubling you, keep in mind that the Employee Assistance Program is here to help. Call 222-6157 to see how the Employee Assistance Program available to you can help.

Agriculture and The Arts Make A Fine Combination

Hey, you want to check out a cool website? Then visit www.homegrownhandmade.com. This site represents an alliance between the agricultural community and the arts, which can make for some fine food and entertainment. If you check out the "Trails" section of the site, you will see that in the Piedmont region in which Cumberland County is located, there's a trail called "Crossroads, PatriArts and Native Ways." This is the trail that moves through Cumberland County and smart travelers will use it to find their way to the very best berries, tomatoes, corn, cantaloupe, and squash produced by farms in this area. Not only that, the website can keep you informed of harvest festivals that bring together good food, good music and lots of fun for the whole family. Bookmark the site so you can see where to go when you are traveling away from home, and how to make the most of the best that Cumberland County agri-arts can offer as well!

Record High Adoption Rates At Animal Control

By Sue Nicholson

The staff at Animal Control is very excited about our newest statistic. Through diligence, hard work, outstanding management from Kathleen (Kitty) Gettings, and incredible work from the shelter staff, we have surpassed the most exciting statistic we monitor - adoption stats.

During the month of July, when adoptions are historically low for shelters and rescues, we have surpassed our previous adoption rates. We are starting the year out right with 76 dogs and 21 cats adopted. This does not count the owner reclaims and rescues. While other shelters in the area were having trouble adopting during the month of July, we stayed busy! As you can see, we are very busy, enjoying every moment and look forward to an exciting year. Just to help you understand the average adoption rates for dogs has been: FY 04 – 45, FY 05 – 35, FY 06 – 61 and now look how we started out this year! We have reason to be excited!

As the Director of Animal Control, I personally thank the shelter staff, Kitty, Amanda, Racine and Nicole for the blood, sweat and tears they give Cumberland County on a daily basis. All of you work very hard to find homes for as many animals as possible each day. For those we cannot find a home, you provide loving care and a last hug as they travel to lasting peace. Your job is hard and you accept this challenge daily as you travel the range of emotions. There's no one like you and "thank you" for being assets for Cumberland County.

A New Approach To Team Building In Animal Control

By Sue Nicholson

While we are a small department with only four small sections, we are very diverse in our responsibilities to Cumberland County and the citizens we serve. Because of this fact and the changes we have implemented within the department during the past year, we will be implementing what I call the "intra-departmental exchange program."

We are scheduling each member of the department two days to experience what their co-workers experience on a daily basis. We began the program on a two-fold basis by implementing the requirement for all new hires to spend two days in the shelter working in another department. Already two members of the shelter have performed "ride along" with the officers, and our new officer, Alan Canady, worked two days in the shelter prior to beginning his duties. Yes, we have our office support and management sections participating as well.

I spoke with the individuals who have participated in the program so far. Comments have ranged from, "I had no idea!" to "Wow, I could never do this job."

We are excited about this program and believe we will all gain a new respect for one another and it will enhance the services we give to one another and the citizens of Cumberland County.

You will save money and help the environment – what a bright idea!

County Employees get **$1.50 OFF** any one of the listed energy efficient light bulbs at Office Depot from August 5th – September 30th 2006:

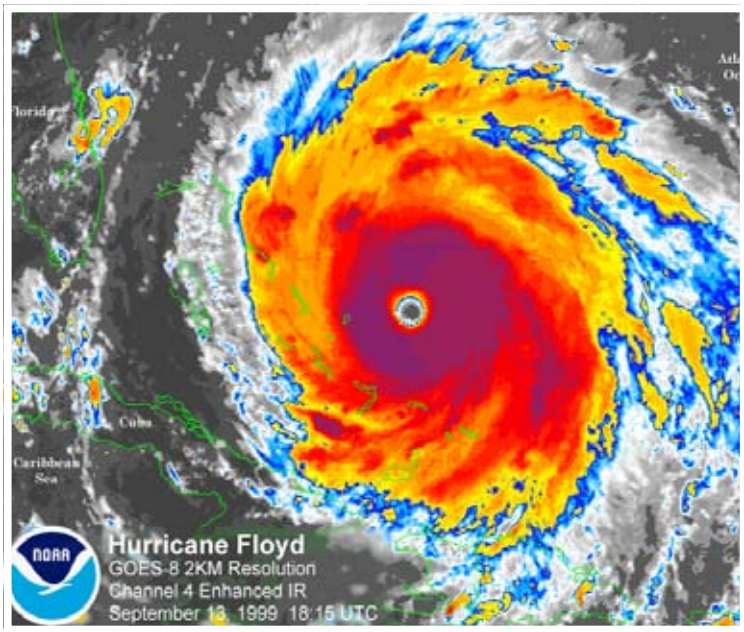
A Bright Idea!

Recently, the National Association of Counties held its annual convention in Chicago. Several Cumberland County commissioners were in attendance, viewing vendor displays and attending NACO workshops, etc. Commissioner Diane Wheatley brought a little something back for county employees.

It's the opportunity for any county employee to save $1.50 on one of four energy efficient General Electric lightbulbs sold at Office Depot. The flyer with the codes for the bulbs and for the discount is reproduced here. Local Office Depot management agrees to honor the discount if the flyer is reproduced and brought in when you make your purchase.

This opportunity will save county employees a little bit of cash, and will save lots of energy as the discount applies only to GE's most energy efficient bulbs. Thanks, Commissioner Wheatley!

Hurricane Season Is Upon Us – Be Aware!



Hurricanes are intense tropical systems with a well-defined surface circulation with maximum sustained winds of 74 mph or greater. Each year, an average of 10 tropical storms develop over the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. Typically, about six of these storms will become hurricanes. The most active months for tropical systems in North Carolina are August and September.

Don't be fooled into thinking "It'll never happen here." Hurricane force winds can extend hundreds of miles inland, so those living throughout the area should take the threat of flying debris, flooding, and falling trees very seriously.

Hurricanes are categorized according to the strength of their winds. A Category One storm has the lowest wind speeds, while a Category Five storm has the most extreme. These are relative terms, because lower category storms can sometimes inflict greater damage than higher category storms, depending on where they strike and the particular hazards they bring.

You do not have to be a native of North Carolina to know the state receives more than its share of hurricane damage. Over the past 10 years, North Carolina has seen Presidentially-declared disasters resulting from hurricanes in locations from the Outer Banks to the Blue Ridge Mountains. No part of the state has gone unaffected from these giant storms over the past decade.

Hurricane forecasts are created four times a day when hurricanes are present. The hurricane forecast and warning information is sent out to all media outlets for relay to everyone. Television, radio, and NOAA weather radio are some of the best means to get the most up to date hurricane information. The internet can also be a good source of information. You can visit the Newport National Weather Service office at www.erh.noaa.gov/rah to get local forecasts, hurricane forecasts, and warnings.

Inland flooding is one of the most serious and deadly threats hurricanes bring to North Carolina. Most hurricane deaths over the past 30 years have been the result of inland flooding. Nearly 78 percent of all children killed in hurricanes drown in these floods. At least 23 percent of all flooding deaths have occurred in cars as people attempt to drive through flooded areas where water covers the road. The NWS safety campaign "Turn around, don't drown" is aimed at educating everyone about the dangers of driving into flood waters. Always keep abreast of road conditions and be sure your escape route is not becoming cut off by flood waters. Never attempt to cross flowing water. As little as six inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle. Never allow children to play near creeks, streams, or drainage ditches, as runoff water can easily sweep a child away.

Preventing the loss of life and minimizing the damage to property from hurricanes are responsibilities that are shared by all. The most important this that you can do is to be informed and prepared. Disaster prevention includes developing a family plan, creating a disaster supply kit, having a place to go, securing your home, and having a pet plan. Your family's disaster plan should be based on your vulnerability to hurricane hazards such as rainfall flooding, high winds, and falling trees. You should keep a written plan and be sure to share it not only with your family, but also with your friends and neighbors. That way everyone will know your plan when a hurricane threatens.

There are certain items that you need to have in your disaster supply kit. This kit is a useful tool when you evacuate as well as making your family as safe as possible in your home. Your kit should include the following…

- Foods that do not need refrigerating or cooking such as canned meats, peanut butter, bread, canned fruit, etc. (Do not use an outside grill indoors!)
- At least 1 gallon of water per person per day for drinking and cleaning (prior to the storm you can fill a collapsible water jug, coolers, or even your clean bathtub)
- Buy an adequate supply of necessary medicines and baby supplies
- Have enough heating fuel (firewood, kerosene, etc) at your home
- Flashlights, a portable radio, batteries, games, and a first aid kit
- Fill up the gas tank in your car prior to the storm arriving

Because of the seriousness of the storm and time it takes to develop and reach land, the public receives ample advance warning. The following terms are used to describe the threat of hurricanes:

A hurricane watch is set up for areas which could be affected within 36 hours. It does not necessarily mean that one will strike, but does allow time for preparation or evacuation.

A hurricane warning means expect the arrival of hurricane conditions within 24 hours. Areas subject to flooding may be ordered to evacuate by local authorities. Warnings may include an assessment of flood danger, high wind warnings, and recommended emergency procedures from local officials.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Cumberland County Emergency Management at 910-678-7688.

Fair Enough!

County employees who are eagerly anticipating the Cumberland County Fair (September 14-24) can benefit from buying the advance tickets that are available.

For just $16, a county employee can buy an advance ticket that includes Fair admission and unlimited ride tickets and coupons. Purchased separately, that's a $34 value!

To learn where the advance tickets can be purchased, call 438-4140. And have fun at the Fair!

Coming to Work? Weather or Not!

We are well into hurricane season, and it's time to make sure you know what to do about your work schedule when inclement weather strikes our area.

If you are in doubt about whether you are expected to come to work, call **678-7701.** That's the number to hear a recorded message about whether county offices are opening late, closing early or will be closed throughout a normal business day.

News of closures and delays will also be available through local media. Go ahead and program the weather line number into your home phone and your cell phone. Then you can always know if the work schedule is being adjusted because of inclement weather.

County's Inclement Weather Line: 678-7701

BENEFITTING

Employment Source
Part of the ServicesSource Network

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH VALUED EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday evening, September 29, at the Highland Country Club

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL HOWARD ABNER
678-7750

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

CROWN CENTER
Coliseum ▪ Expo Center ▪ Arena ▪ Theatre

September 3rd T.I. & Busta Rhymes
Crown Coliseum – 7:30 PM

Cumberland County Fair
CROWN CENTER

September 14th - 24th
Cumberland County Fair
Crown Center – Mon.-Fri. Opens 4:30 PM;
Sat.-Sun. Opens 12:00 PM

September 14th Carrie Underwood
On Sale June 9 – Crown Coliseum, 8:00 PM

September 21st
Lynyrd Skynyrd & .38 Special
Crown Coliseum, 4:00 PM

October 18th CATS
Crown Theater – 7:30 PM