



CONNECTION



VOLUME V, ISSUE II

MARCH 2008

Think the Sales Tax Doesn't Matter? –Think Again!

County employees are hardworking, busy people, juggling the demands of work, family, personal interests, and civic responsibility. Perhaps you are among the thousands of people who voted for the ¼-cent sales tax last November, regretting that it was narrowly defeated at the polls. As a county employee, you understand the importance of revenue to the county's fiscal health and you may have realized that the ¼-cent sales tax failure at the polls would have budgetary repercussions.

County commissioners have placed the ¼-cent sales tax back on the ballot this May, and linked it with a binding resolution to reduce the property tax rate by 2 cents if the sales tax referendum passes. An advocacy group, Cumberland County Citizens For Fair Taxes, has formed to help educate the public on the issue, and persuade voters to support the referendum.

The potential consequences are serious if the ¼-cent sales tax referendum does not gain the support of Cumberland County voters in May. A budget deficit of more than \$4 million will have to be dealt with, which means departments would have to forego new requirements; cost of living allowances for employees would have to be drastically reduced or even eliminated in the budget; and certain services to the public might have to be curtailed or eliminated. As a growing county, facing an influx of population within the very near future, these options are not desirable. But they could be necessary.



As a county employee, acquaint yourself with the facts on the ¼-cent sales tax issue. Facts about it are available on our website, and there will be more material generated by the Cumberland County Citizens for Fair Taxes group. Be informed, then make an informed decision about how you will vote on this important issue.

County Government Week Theme: *Protecting Our Children*

NATIONAL COUNTY GOVERNMENT WEEK is April 6-10 this year and, as always, Cumberland County will be observing the focus on counties in a variety of ways. This year's theme is "Protecting Our Children," a commitment that is engaged in by many county government departments.

The week begins with a significant event – the County Commissioners' meeting which, because it's the first Monday of the month, will begin at 9 a.m. in Room 118, the Commissioners' chambers.

On Wednesday, April 9, the traditional ceremony honoring employees with long service to the county will be held at 8 A.M. in the Commissioners' chambers. Employees with more than 20 years of longevity will be presented pins and publicly thanked for their service by one or more of the commissioners. A reception with light refreshment will follow in Room 119.



COUNTY MANAGER'S MESSAGE



I want to tell you all about an opportunity that could improve your health – and save you money, too. The County is sponsoring a HEALTH FAIR for current employees, and their spouses, if the spouse is covered under the County's Health Plan. The Fair will span three days, April 2, 3, and 4 at the Crown Coliseum. A make-up day will be on May 7 at the same location.

At this Fair, the usual biometric activity will be offered. Your height, weight, blood pressure, and blood sugar will be measured. Your spouse, if covered by the county plan, may also participate. Other family members, covered or not by the county's health insurance plan, are not included in this Health Fair.

Before attending the Health Fair, you will be asked to fill out a Health Risk Assessment booklet, answering questions about your own personal health and fitness. Again, your spouse if covered by the county health plan, will receive a Health Risk Assessment booklet, too. Once again, it is Cape Fear Valley Medical System who is assisting the county in assessing the wellness of our employees, and we are

grateful for their expertise in doing so.

Now about the money you can save. The premiums paid by employees for health care will rise \$30 monthly as of 1 July. However, you can be given a \$30 discount if you participate in the Health Fair and Health Risk Assessment. In effect, your premiums would remain what they are now by doing so. Those employees who do not participate will see their health insurance premiums rise by \$30 effective 1 July 2008.

Do the right thing for your health and your pocketbook. Plan now to fill out the Health Risk Assessment, which will be distributed to you soon, and attend one of the sessions at the Crown Coliseum to learn the true status of your health.



WELCOME ABOARD!



Phyllis Jones Joins Cumberland County Legal Team

PHYLLIS P. JONES joined the Cumberland County legal department as an Assistant County Attorney in January. Focusing on employment law and general litigation for the County, she will work with human services agencies including the departments of Social Services, Health and Mental Health.

Ms. Jones holds an undergraduate degree from Duke University, and a law degree and Masters in Public Policy from the University of Michigan. She also holds a Masters in Divinity degree from Hood Theological Seminary.

Ms. Jones teaches legal writing at NC Central University. Most recently, she worked for NC Supreme Court Justice Patricia Timmons-Goodson. Earlier in her career, she clerked for the Honorable James Erwin in the United States District Court for the Middle District of North Carolina. She has experience with the Equal Employment Opportunity office in Baltimore, Maryland. She has also served for many years as the DSS Attorney for Rockingham County's Department of Social Services.



Geneva Mixon Appointed Director of Workforce Development

EFFECTIVE March 2, GENEVA MIXON has assumed the position of Director of the Workforce Development Center. She has been with that organization for almost fifteen years.

Mrs. Mixon came to our community as so many do, as a member of an Army family. Her three sons are all in college now so Geneva has a little more time for the things she enjoys in life, such as travel and collecting miniature elephants, the symbol of her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta.

Fayetteville Cumberland

HUMAN RELATIONS

APRIL IS FAIR HOUSING MONTH, and in recognition of National Fair Housing Month, we would like to share with you some actual facts on the Fair Housing Act, and how you can protect yourself from being a victim of housing discrimination.

What is the Fair Housing Act?

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing or housing related transactions on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, or disability by housing providers or lending institutions such as landlords, real estate agencies, banks or mortgage companies.

What's prohibited under the Fair Housing Act?

- Refusal to rent or sell housing
- Refusal to negotiate for housing
- To set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- To provide different housing services or facilities
- To falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting)



EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

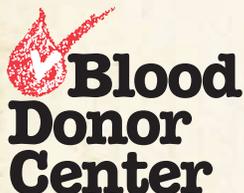
or

For more information on this and the upcoming fair housing workshop in April, please contact the Fayetteville-Cumberland Human Relations Department at: 910-433-1696 or 910-433-1698.

There Will Be Blood

THE BLOOD DONOR CENTER OF CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM will be back at the Courthouse on Tuesday, March 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. Many county employees are regular blood donors, and the contribution they make literally saves the lives of the sick and injured people who receive that blood.

It doesn't take long to be a donor – most appointments are complete in 15 minutes, start to finish. You can schedule yourself for a 15-minute appointment by emailing svanderclute@co.cumberland.nc.us and requesting a specific time. The Blood Donor staff will also happily accept walk-ins, so look for their big Bloodmobile in the parking lot on Tuesday afternoon, March 4, and volunteer to become a new donor.



If you want to learn more about the restrictions that affect blood donations, call the Blood Donor Center at 609-6300.



Reaping What You Sow

Integrated Program being conducted by NC Cooperative Extension will use gardening as a “hands-on” environment to involve and educate youth ages 5-19 in age appropriate activities

about gardening to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle; to grow, prepare (“Kids In the Kitchen” learn healthy nutrition,) and learn to preserve your own food; to learn about Entrepreneurship, via the Farmer’s Market, learn career exploration for older youth (other than being a farmer) and fun field trips for each age group.

Sound Interesting?

This is for all ages of youth, 5-19, so all are invited. Spread the word. Space will be limited. Registration information will be available March 1 with registration packet due by March 7. Cost is \$25 per person. All participants are expected to complete the entire program which will run from the Kick off on March 20 - through the “Kids In The Kitchen” weeks (varies by age) and final celebration during mid August.



March To Work

Our 10th annual MARCH TO WORK Job Fair will take place on Thursday March 27, 2008 between the hours of 9am – 2pm at the Department of Social Services Building located at 1225 Ramsey St. This event is open to the public and FREE to both job seekers and vendors. This annual event is a partnership between the Work First Program at DSS, City of Fayetteville Community Development, FTCC, Beasley Broadcast Group, Fayetteville Observer, and Cumberland County Business Council. This year’s business sponsors are Marco’s Pizza, Domino’s Pizza, Pizza Hut and Krispy Kreme Doughnuts.

Do It For Your Health... And for the Savings!

ON APRIL 2, 3, AND 4, the County will once again be offering a HEALTH FAIR to our employees, and this time, spouses who are covered by the county's health insurance plan are also invited to participate. At the Health Fair, height, weight, blood pressure and blood sugar will be checked. A make-up Health Fair is scheduled for May 7. All Health Fair sessions will take place at the Crown Coliseum.

Prior to the Health Fair, each employee and each spouse covered by the county's health plan will be given a Health Risk Assessment booklet. The questionnaire within the booklet should be filled out before attending any of the Health Fair sessions.

Family members other than spouses are not included in this Health Fair opportunity.

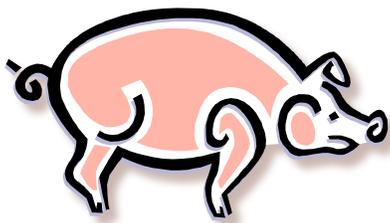
Premiums for health insurance coverage under the County's plan will rise \$30 per month effective I July 2008. However, any employee who participates in the Health Fair process will receive a \$30 monthly discount on premiums, in effect maintaining the current cost for health care coverage.

Please inform your personnel about this opportunity to become more informed about their own health and to save some money in the process. Your department will soon receive sign-up sheets that will enable your staff to schedule appointments that will be convenient and will also maintain department operations.

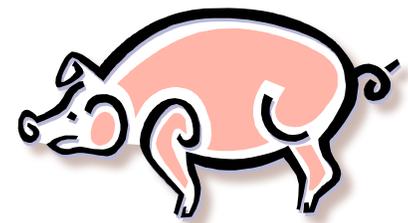
Specific questions can be addressed to Julie Crawford, Risk Management, 223-3327.



CUMBERLAND COUNTY 4-H FOUNDATION 3RD ANNUAL FRIED CHICKEN OR PORK BBQ PLATE FUNDRAISER



FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2008
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Lunch Only)



Dine In or Drive Thru or Delivery
(Delivery Available for 10 or More Plates!)

FRIED CHICKEN OR PORK BBQ PLATE
COST \$6.00 PER PLATE



North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office
Charlie Rose Agri-Expo Center
301 East Mountain Dr, Fayetteville NC



Tickets are available from Foundation Members,
4-H Members and/or the 4-H Office
If you have any questions, please call Donna at 910-321-6864.

Proceeds Benefit Cumberland County 4-H
THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!



The Big Read Returns

The Friends of the Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center and various community partners are again offering a community-wide reading program this year.

The Big Read: Fahrenheit 451 will be held March 28 to April 30. Cumberland County residents will be encouraged to read and discuss Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, the story of a fireman whose job requires him to burn books. The novel deals vividly with the theme of intellectual freedom.

Programs are scheduled throughout the county at all seven public library locations, Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fort Bragg, the Hope Mills Sunshine Center and Barnes & Noble bookstore. The Fayetteville Museum of Art is sponsoring children's programs at the public libraries during The Big Read.

Programming includes various activities for all ages, including book discussions, film screenings, guest speakers, a read-a-thon, a public forum on censorship, a quilt exhibit and musical events. Adults and teens are encouraged to participate in essay contests. The winners will have their essay published in The Fayetteville Observer and receive a \$100 gift card to a local book store.

Copies of the book are available for check out at the public libraries, as well as Throckmorton Library on Fort Bragg, Pope Air Force Base Library, Davis Memorial Library at Methodist University, Charles Chesnut Library at FSU, and the FTCC library. Free reader's guides are available at all partner locations.

Classroom sets of the novel were donated to 19 public middle and high schools in Cumberland County for use during The Big Read. Book clubs are encouraged to check out a discussion kit that includes reader's guide and 10 copies of the book.

The Big Read is an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Institute of Museum and Library Services designed to revitalize the role of literature in American culture and bring the transformative power of literature into the lives of its

citizens. The Big Read brings together partners across the country to encourage citizens to read for pleasure and enlightenment.

The Friends of the Library received a \$20,000 grant from the NEA, which provides materials such as reader's guides, audio guides, banners, public service announcements and bookmarks in support of the project.

This project is also supported by an \$8,000 grant from Cumberland Community Foundation and a \$5,000 grant from the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County, with funds from the North Carolina Arts Council, the City of Fayetteville, the County of Cumberland, and private contributions. Media sponsors are The Fayetteville Observer, Up & Coming Weekly and Cumulus Broadcasting.

Go to www.cumberland.lib.nc.us for more information or call 483-7727 ext. 210.

Pick up a book and reader's guide and enjoy a great American classic.



Cumberland County Green Fest

Learn more about going green at the Headquarters Library on April 5. The library is hosting Green Fest that Saturday in the Pate Room starting at 1 p.m.

Author Lyle Estill, president of Piedmont Biofuels, will show how to make and use biodiesel. He will also talk about life in a local economy. His books, Biodiesel Power and Small Is Possible, will be available for purchase.

Master Gardener Paul Johnson will explain the connection between lawns and air pollution and discuss alternatives. Featured organizations include the Pesticide Education Project, Watershed Action Team, and Lafayette Market.

There will be door prizes and a special green activity for children. Registration is required by calling Rhonda Williams at 483-7727 ext. 308.

Internet Enrollment

Cumberland County Government 2008 Cafeteria Benefits Enrollment



INTERNET ENROLLMENT DATES: April 7—April 30, 2008

Enroller Support Dates: April 14—April 18, 2008

EFFECTIVE DATE OF COVERAGE: JULY 1, 2008

Deadline Date To Enroll: April 30, 2008

No changes will be allowed after this date.

Remember, you MUST RE-ELECT your Gilsbar Health Care &/or Dependent Care Account. It will not automatically continue each year.

Products that can be enrolled on the Internet:

- Gilsbar Health Care Account
- Gilsbar Dependent Care Account
- Assurity Cancer
- Ameritas Dental
- Standard Life Short Term Disability

Products that cannot be changed or enrolled on the Internet:

- CSO Cancer (Must see a Mark III Rep)
- UnumProvident UL (Must see a Mark III Rep)
- Aetna Term Life (Must see a Mark III Rep)
- Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Insurance (must see the BCBS representative for all changes)

How to Log on to the Internet to Enroll

- Go to: www.co.cumberland.nc.us and click "Internet Enrollment"
- You will see the Cumberland County Government Welcome Page
- Logging on:
 - Enter Case ID number: 811
 - Enter the Online ID, which is your social security number.
 - Enter your password which is: enroll08

Contacts For Internet Enrollment:

- Cindy Horton (800)532-1044 ext. 210 / cindy@markiiiifinancial.com
- Julie Crawford (910)223-3327 / jcrawford@co.cumberland.nc.us

**Plan arranged and enrolled by:
Mark III Brokerage, Inc. (800) 532-1044**



CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT... WORKING FOR YOU!

JAMES MARTIN, COUNTY MANAGER
COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE
117 Dick Street
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Fayetteville, NC 28301
Phone: 910-678-7723
Fax: 910-678-7717
Email: jmartin@co.cumberland.nc.us

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.

VISIT US ON THE WEB: [HTTP:// WWW.CO.CUMBERLAND.NC.US/](http://www.co.cumberland.nc.us/)



THERE WHEN YOU NEED A FRIEND

Everyone needs a real friend now and then. The kind of friend that can be trusted to keep a confidence, the kind of friend that truly wants you to be untroubled and unperturbed.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can be a friend to you and your family members. Whether you are being overwhelmed with a personal or a work-related concern, let your EAP professional work with you to solve your issues. Your supervisor does not have to be

made aware you are using the program, unless you choose to share that information.

To initiate the assistance of the Employee Assistance Program, please call 222-6157. If you call, you'll find a friend who wants to help.

COUNTY KUDOS!

CUMBERLAND COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS has been reaccredited as a Center of Excellence by the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch.

COUNTY ATTORNEY GRAINGER BARRETT was recently notified that he was the second highest attendee at the Healthplex in 2007. He is working hard to stay healthy!

