



CONNECTION

VOLUME V, ISSUE III

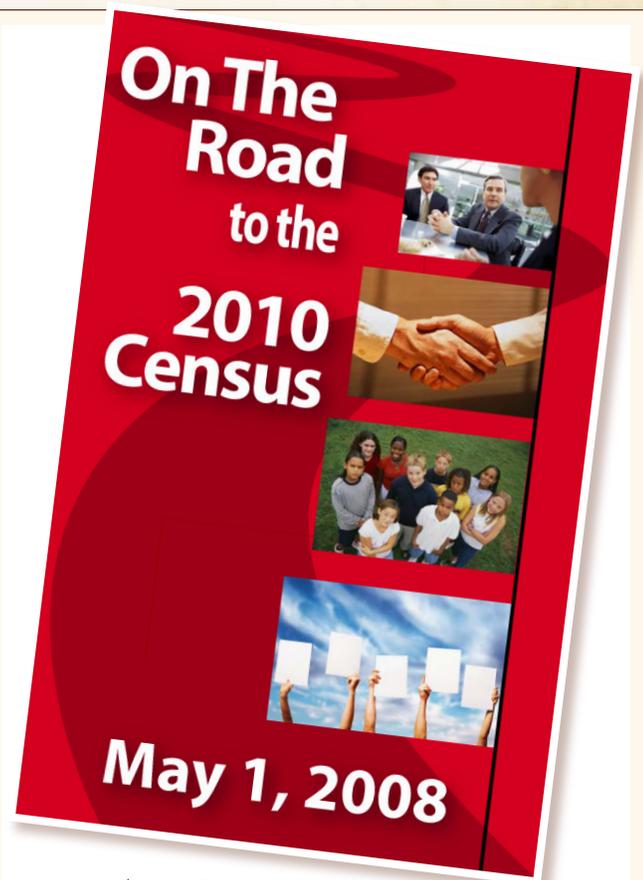
MAY 2008

Everyone Benefits. Everyone Shares.

The headline is a thought you may have heard something about in recent weeks. It alludes to the ¼-cent sales tax referendum that's on the ballot in this month's primary election. The Citizens For Fair Taxes, a group made up of interested local leaders, coined the slogan as the best way to express what is good about the proposed sales tax. We will all benefit from the revenue stream that the tax will bring, and everyone will share in paying the tax. And that includes the visitors and shoppers who come to Cumberland County every day, too.

Cumberland County's elected leaders put this item on the ballot in order to develop a revenue stream that will help the county fund the many pressing needs before us. Schools, library branches and a modern and efficient public health building will be funded with the revenue, and there are many other pressing needs a bit further out on the horizon that will need funding.

The county commissioners have unanimously entered into a binding agreement to lower the property tax rate by 2 cents IF the sales tax is passed by voters.



Make Sure Cumberland County Counts!

The date this newsletter is published, May 1, 2008, is also Census Day. That's when the questionnaire that you recently received in the mail should be filled out and mailed back. If you haven't filled yours out yet, do it right away, because it really does matter.

This is the Dress Rehearsal for the actual census that takes place every ten years.

United States™
Census
2010

COUNTY MANAGER'S MESSAGE



Early voting in the primary election began on April 17, and many of you may have already voted. For those who have not, I urge you to exercise this right and vote now or on May 6. Your voice is important, and your vote does count. In addition to choosing among the Presidential candidates and others who are seeking elected office, there is a very important referendum on this ballot. That is the choice of voting FOR or AGAINST the ¼-cent sales tax that our Board of Commissioners has asked voters to pass. You can get the facts on this important issue by visiting the county's website, www.co.cumberland.nc.us.

You are all aware that Cumberland County is a growing county with many needs. Funding those needs is an ongoing challenge, and the revenue stream that will result from the passage of the ¼-cent sales tax will address that challenge. That money will be used for schools, library branches, and a modern and efficient public health building, as well as the many other pressing needs of the county. Acquaint yourself with the facts on this issue and then vote. Don't overlook the item on the ballot.

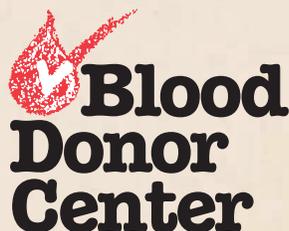
Thank you for all that each of you do for the citizens of Cumberland County.



Need for Blood at Critical Level

The Blood Donor Center of Cape Fear Valley Medical System is still desperately seeking contributions of blood. Their staff will be here in the Courthouse on Tuesday, June 17 from noon to 4 p.m. to accept blood donations.

Because the normal parking area for the bloodmobile won't be available due to parking lot renovations, they will set up in Room 119 on the first floor of the Courthouse. Plan now to give blood if you can; you can set up a 15-minute appointment with Sara VanderClute, Public Information Director, at 437-1921. The Blood Donor Center staff will also be happy to accept walk-in donors.



Another Opportunity By Which to Get Fit!!

Cumberland County employees are offered a reduced membership fee to use the facilities of Cape Fear Valley Medical System's Healthplex. Some employees find the Healthplex inconveniently located, so there's now another option available for those who want a place closer to the courthouse to exercise.



According to Chico Silman, the Director of Risk Management, AIT has offered county employees the opportunity to use the AIT Fitness Studio, located in the AIT building on Hay Street, for a monthly fee of \$15. There's no long-term commitment necessary, it's pay as you go. The studio opens at 6 a.m., stays open til midnight, and that includes weekends, too.

The AIT gym features a full line of HOIST and Body Solid strength-training equipment, and 4 tons of free weights and dumbbells. Cardio equipment by Vision Fitness, Star Trac, and Schwinn will get your heart pumping!

The contact at AIT is Dee Nott, and her number is 321-1300.

Local Honor Society Contributes To Animal Welfare

INTERIM DIRECTOR OF ANIMAL CONTROL, LARRY PHILPOTT, is seen here accepting a donation of a Petsmart gift card for the use of the Animal Control department. Megan Wiggins, an 8th-grade student at Grays Creek Middle School, and vice-president of that school's National Junior Honor Society, presented Mr. Philpott the donation after a fundraiser conducted by the Grays Creek NJHS. Mr. Philpott thanked the group of young people and commended them for their generosity and interest in the welfare of animals.



● Mobile communications / By Katherine Frisch

Loud and Clear

One department's journey from analog to digital two-way radios.

Frequent battery replacements, missed calls, and garbled messages meant just one thing to Albert Brunson, head of public building equipment maintenance for Cumberland County, N.C.: time to update his mobile communications system.

"We were using 'brick radios,'" he says. "The units were heavy, analog handhelds, some dating to the 1970s and '80s. We were swapping out batteries at least twice a year, and at \$50 to \$60 per battery that added up."

Like all public sector managers, Brunson's choice of new equipment would be driven by cost. But deciding whether to depend on radio- or cellular-based com-

munications technology also depends on geography and need.

"Our main concern was coverage, because our signal was so limited," says Brunson. "In many cases, technicians had to step outside buildings to communicate. If two electricians were working in the same building in different locations, they couldn't supply updates or inform one another of potential emergencies."

Brunson's team services the air conditioning, heating, plumbing, electricity, and refrigeration systems of more than 80 buildings scattered throughout the 661-square-mile county. When his colleagues within the county's Maintenance

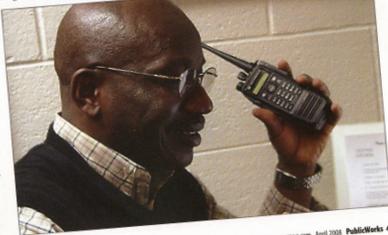
Department expressed interest in joining his quest for a more effective system, they quickly realized that cell phones would be cost-prohibitive.

"With 18 people in my department alone, and a unit cost of \$45 per phone, we had to stay with two-way radios," he says.

MIGRATING FROM ANALOG TO DIGITAL

In addition to lower upfront costs, Brunson calculated that radios offer lower total cost of ownership because they don't require a monthly fee like cell phones do. According to Motorola, a two-way radio system typically pays for

Last year, the Maintenance Department for Cumberland County, N.C., spent \$71,000 on 59 digital two-way radios with carrying cases. Supervisors like Albert Brunson can text-message each other, or call an individual, a group of technicians, or all technicians in the field simultaneously. Photos: David Buchmueller



www.publicworks.com April 2008 PublicWorks 41

Describing the use of digital radios, AL BRUNSON and the employees in the building maintenance department spoke with writer Katherine

Frisch about how they use the radios and how they help the department to be more efficient. The article also features photos of BRUNSON, PEGGY PRICE, and MILTON ZANDIOTIS.

Kudos to the entire building maintenance crew for being such knowledgeable professionals that the magazine focused on them in this way. This article not only reflects well on the employees, but on Cumberland County government as well.



April 2008 Issue Public Works Magazine

Building and Equipment Maintenance Staff Featured In Trade Magazine Article

You're not likely to find the magazine, *PublicWorks*, on any local newsstand, but it is a respected publication within the industry. In the April issue, an article titled, "Loud and Clear" features pictures and comments from our own building maintenance professionals.



Top: Maintenance systems specialist Milton Zandiotis, also known as the "Keeper of the Parts," coordinates requests from technicians whether they're on the road or working in the basement of one of Cumberland County's 80 buildings. Bottom: Administrative assistant Peggy Price no longer worries about dropping two-way radio calls to or from supervisors and maintenance technicians working throughout 661-square-mile Cumberland County.



Bottom: Administrative assistant Peggy Price no longer worries about dropping two-way radio calls to or from supervisors and maintenance technicians working throughout 661-square-mile Cumberland County.

itself in less than 18 months.

In addition, digital two-way radio systems operating on licensed spectrum offer capabilities that other mobile technologies cannot. The maintenance department was able to tailor a solution to meet specific coverage and functional requirements without investing in supporting infrastructure for employees working in the field, or using an often unreliable and more costly public network.

So last July, the department bought 50 Motorola MOTOTRBO handheld units for landscaping, buildings and grounds, carpentry, and animal control divisions, tents, and associated support items. The ministerial coordinator, and security desk at the county courthouse received another nine units.

In addition to combining voice communication and wireless data applications into one device, the system offers a flexible privacy option between individual users and groups without degrading voice quality or requiring additional hardware.

"With integrated voice and data capability, public works departments don't have to invest in two separate technol-

gies," says Paul Cizek, director of professional communication radios for North America, Motorola. At the same time, technicians can take advantage of the talk-channel network.

"A group of plumbers can talk, plumbing issues all day without the rest of the department getting the call," says Brunson.

TDMA ADDS CAPACITY

MOTOTRBO is based on time division multiple access (TDMA) technology that allows for two virtual channels within a single 12.5-MHz licensed repeater channel, which gives customers twice the calling capacity for the price of one license. Because there's only one "real" channel, a second call doesn't require a second repeater.

Though known as the "Sand Hills," Cumberland County's fairly flat terrain doesn't impede radio reception. The de-

partment's real challenge is distance. When signal strength drops off with distance, digital error-correction technology delivers audio and digital content with virtually no loss over a far greater area.

Digital systems based on TDMA divide power-intensive transmissions into each transmission only uses half the battery power of an analog system transmitting at the same wattage. Because transmitting is the most energy-intensive operation, digital two-way radios typically function 40% longer between recharges than analog radios.

Digital two-way radio systems based on TDMA can provide additional features beyond two-way voice by using the second time slot for a second call or to dialing and control for future enhancements such as emergency pre-emption.

TEXT-MESSAGING WORK ORDERS

Text messaging enables text-formatted communication between radios and dispatch systems, radios and email-addressable devices, and radios and remote PC clients. Motorola's Cizek says more customers are using text messaging to exchange work tickets and work orders.

In Cumberland County, to accommodate text messaging and selective-call capability (the most used enhancements), all maintenance department supervisors and team chiefs received keypad modems. The rest of the crew received non-keypad models.

Using a GPS modem and receiver integrated within the radios, the system provides dispatched-based location tracking of people and vehicles. The GPS software enables a computer to display maps and the location of each GPS-enabled radio.

Though the system is GPS-ready, the department hasn't used its asset tracking capability. "Once we had the radios fielded, we discovered that our tower required additional enhancements to use the GPS capability," says Brunson, who adds that the tower will be further updated.

Meanwhile, a telemetry enhancement is available to allow technicians to command and control remote functions.

"For example, if a vehicle is powered on or a gate is left open, a signal can be sent to one or all radios," says Cizek. "In a remote location example, the radios can

Be Considerate of Your Colleagues

Did you ever find yourself needing a piece of information that an employee in another department could provide? You call the employee and get a message that he is unavailable at the moment and to leave your name and number. And you do. And you call again and leave another message. You rearrange your work schedule, hoping you'll get the needed information so you can wrap up the task at hand. You call again. Leave another message. And then you find out that the employee you've been leaving messages for is gone for the entire week!



Don't waste your colleagues' time by thoughtlessly failing to update your phone message. It just takes a moment to leave an accurate message as to when you can return a call. Be sure you keep your phone message up to date – it's inconsiderate of your colleagues and it can make a citizen seeking information really unhappy.

EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED



GLORIA SIMMS of Emergency Management was among the group of county employees honored for their longevity during National County Government Week last

month. Gloria has served 25 years, and is wearing her pin proudly in this photo. Congratulations to all County employees receiving pins – no matter how many years of service. The County wouldn't be the same without you!

LIBRARY NEWS

- Looking for entertaining ways to spend your free time this summer without using too much gas? The library can help you find fun things to do in Fayetteville. Join us on Sunday, May 18 at 3 p.m. at Headquarters Library as Katherine Miller, from the Fayetteville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, describes the fun experiences our community offers, including free outdoor concerts, art gallery openings, indoor rock climbing, hiking trails, dance clubs and more.



- MAUREEN SOCHA, recently hired as a Librarian I at the Spring Lake Branch Library, is serving as the Fayetteville Technical Community College – Spring Lake Campus Liaison to the library system. She received a bachelor's degree from Purdue University in 1993 and earned a Master of Library Science degree from Indiana University in 1997.

- The Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center is celebrating Older Americans Month in May with a wide variety of programs that recognize the changing nature of this population's needs. Topics include cooking for one or two, grandparents raising grandchildren, Internet scams, volunteering and legal advice. For more information, visit the library's Web site at www.cumberland.lib.nc.us or call 483-7727 ext. 210.

The library is also starting a "Book a Librarian" program that offers one-on-one assistance with a librarian for up to 45 minutes on Thursdays, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm at North Regional Branch Library and Mondays 9:00 am - 12:00 pm at East Regional Branch Library. Sessions must be booked in advance by calling North Regional Branch at 822-1998 ext. 222 or East Regional Branch at 485-2955 ext. 240. Customers are limited to two sessions per month.



CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT... WORKING FOR YOU!

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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/)



Little Miss Fayetteville – One of Our Own!

You may not have known that we have a Princess among our Cumberland County employee family – but we do! Little Tanna Gillis, daughter of Internal Auditor Tammy Gillis, is the reigning Little Miss Fayetteville and also Miss Fayetteville's Carolina Princess. She has won both titles this year, and will compete in June at the Miss North Carolina Princess Pageant. She'll be spending a week in Raleigh with the Miss North Carolina Pageant, accompanying Miss Fayetteville as her Carolina Princess.

Tanna is a second-grader at Armstrong Elementary. Her mother is now known affectionately by her colleagues as The Queen Mother.

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.

