CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

CONNECTION

VOLUME V, ISSUE VI NOVEMBER 2008

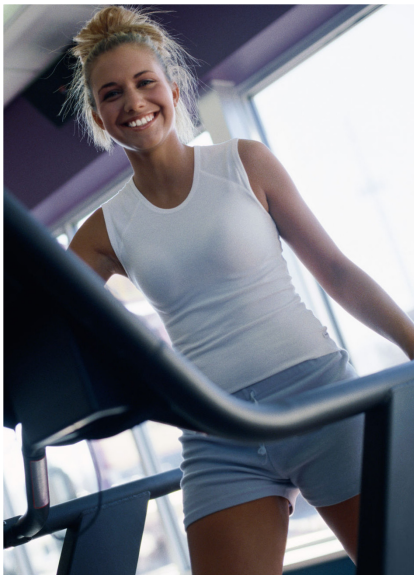
Doing What's Right

You have recently received information on a new initiative within the County that is designed to maintain the integrity of County government. As individuals, we want a reputation as being ethical and honest. We want our entire county workforce to enjoy that same reputation, and to deserve it.

Here's where you can help. If you see inappropriate behavior or observe fraud, waste or abuse among the county's workforce, you have two options. You can talk to your supervisor about your concerns. Or if you prefer to remain anonymous, you can call THE NETWORK AT 866-614-9683. You will talk to an interviewer who will take down your report and you will not have to reveal your name or any identifying information. The interviewer to whom you will speak is located in another state.

If anonymity is important to you, feel assured that you can remain anonymous and still make a report to bring a problem to the attention of management. Whether you speak to your peers, your supervisor or the anonymous hot line, it is important to speak out when you see something wrong.

Help us all maintain high standards of professional behavior and speak up when you see those standards lapse.



Wellness Still Matters!

Cumberland County employees will have an opportunity in April to attend a WELLNESS FAIR and learn where they stand with their weight, cholesterol levels and blood pressure. The Fair is scheduled for next April 7, 8 and 9.

In this fiscal year, employees who participated in a Wellness Fair received a discount on their health insurance premiums. That will also be the case in 2009. In 2010, discounts will be offered to those employees whose health measurements fall in normal ranges, or who show improvement in their health metrics.

You will hear more about the Wellness Fair, and the opportunity to become more educated about your own health, in the coming months. Health benefits are a valuable fringe benefit to county employees, and containing the costs associated with that benefit is an important goal.

COUNTY MANAGER'S MESSAGE

We're entering the holiday time of year and I want to take this opportunity to extend to each of you my best wishes for a very happy holiday season. We all have much to be grateful for at Thanksgiving, and we have a bright future to look forward to as we begin the new year of 2009.

You will have received information about the new hotline program we've initiated recently. I do want every employee to understand the importance of doing our jobs with high ethical standards, avoiding even the appearance of fraud, waste or abuse of our positions. This program will provide an anonymous way of bringing to the attention of management any such problems within county government. We all know the difference between right and wrong – if you see wrong, report it.

As this eventful year of 2008 draws to a close, let me thank each of you for all that you do for Cumberland County and our 300,000-plus citizens. The work you do makes for a better community for us all.

The Season of Sharing

This year, as in years past, Cumberland County will participate in the FAYETTEVILLE URBAN MINISTRY/ SALVATION ARMY FOOD DRIVE. This food gathering operation distributes food to families in need in mid-December, so the food collection boxes will be put out at various county buildings by November 17. The boxes will be collected the week of December 8 so that the food contributions can be delivered to the Fayetteville Urban Ministry warehouse on December 12.

This year, Campbell's Soups is making a donation to the Food Drive, so they don't need much soup. Rusty Long, the Executive Director of the Fayetteville Urban Ministry, says that plastic jars of peanut butter, jellies and spaghetti sauce are especially welcome, as are sturdy bags or boxes of rice and grits. They get lots of canned corn and green beans, which are welcome, but other canned vegetables are also needed. Please, no glass containers of any kind.

And please don't use the Food Drive as an opportunity to rid your pantry of outdated items – make sure the foods you contribute are not past their safe "Use By" date. Cumberland County employees have a longstanding reputation for being generous; the 2008 Food Drive will continue that admirable tradition.

Blood Donor Center

Be A Blood Donor

The BLOOD DONOR CENTER will return to give county employees at the Courthouse and the Law Enforcement Center an opportunity to give life-saving blood on Friday, Nov. 7, 2008. This time, the Bloodmobile will be in a different location, due to the ongoing construction work at the back entrance to the Courthouse. This time, you'll find the Bloodmobile near the Russell Street entrance to Dick Street, adjacent to the upper parking deck of the Law Enforcement Center. They'll be there from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

They can take two donors every 15 minutes, and you can schedule with Sara VanderClute, Public Information Director at 437-1921, or you can call Major Black at 677-5445. Your contribution could save a life, so if you are an eligible donor, please plan to give on Friday, November 7.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY KUDOS

Warren Awarded State's Top Honor

LEE WARREN, CUMBERLAND COUNTY'S REGISTER OF DEEDS, was awarded in September the State of North Carolina's top civilian honor – the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

The award is given to those who have built a proven record of service or special achievement. Warren qualifies on both counts. He has served as an elected official for the past sixteen years, as a Cumberland County commissioner and Register of Deeds. He also achieved an extraordinary distinction as the NC Chairman for Ducks Unlimited for the past two years. He led the organization to the second in the nation for its accomplishments in his first year as Chairman; this past year, the NC organization ranked first nationally.

Warren is grateful for the honor bestowed upon him, which is not unique to his family. His father was presented the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in the 1970s.

Warren with Deputy Register of Deeds, Pam Gore, displaying award

DSS Welcomes New Director

As the September 2008 Connection went to press, the Cumberland County Department of Social Services was welcoming a new director to the agency. BRENDA REID JACKSON took the reins of DSS on September 2. Now that she has two months service behind her, we all welcome her to the Cumberland County fold.

A native of Farmville, Ms. Jackson was previously employed as a Program Manager with the North Carolina Division of Social Services, providing day to day supervision of the largest child support office in the state. She has more than two decades of human services experience, having held several key positions in both local and state governments, including Director of Greene County DSS and Deputy Director of Mecklenburg County DSS.

Cooperative Extension Employees Honored

During the 2008 North Carolina Cooperative Extension Secretaries Association State meeting the following Cumberland County employees were honored.

PEGGY ELLIOTT, Secretary, Commercial Horticulture and Row Crops, won the distinguished NCCESA State Executive Board Award. Peggy also received a 15 Years of Service Award.

CAROLYN HODGES, Secretary, Family and Consumer Sciences, was awarded a 30 Years of Service Award.

SUSAN JOHNSON, Administrative Assistant, received the South Central District Award of Excellence in Special Leadership.

During the 2008 National Association of Extension 4-H Agents meeting, KRISTA HANCOCK, Extension Agent, 4-H, received the 4-H/Army Youth Development Project Salute Award.

Congratulations!

An Outstanding Employee

The OUTSTANDING COUNTY EMPLOYEE AWARD was given in October to MIKE OSBOURN, of the Planning and Inspections Department, at the Board of Commissioners meeting which was held on Oct. 20. This has been a good year for Mike – he was invited to be in Las Vegas by the Pitney Bowes company to receive an award for his work with their MapInfo system earlier this year. Those of us who rely on him day to day in assisting citizens, answering questions, or understanding the capacities of our mapping software, know he's an outstanding employee, and it's good to see him publicly recognized as such.

2008 United Way Campaign

The UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN among county employees ended on October 17. With a few late contributions, the county's total exceeded $37,000.

Twenty employees contributed a Fair Share, an amount that matches or exceeds one hour's pay per month. Four employees were Marquis Donors, contributing $1,000 or more this year. All funds, whether one time donations or payroll deductions that will occur throughout 2009, will go to fund the agencies supported by the United Way.

Help With Heat Available

Cold weather is approaching, and the County's LOW INCOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM will be taking applications from local families between November 3 and November 14. For information on the LIEAP, call their information line (677-2821) anytime until November 28. Applicants for the LIEAP will need verification of income, Social Security, ID and a current bank statement if applicable. Eligible households will receive an energy payment in February or March 2009.

The Crisis Intervention Program is available for more urgent assistance needs as funding is appropriated. The Salvation Army takes CIP applications at 226 South Cool Spring Street, and you can get more info by calling (910) 307-0359.

Hats off to DSS employees Janis Abrams, Kim McLamb and Betty Beasley for administering these programs.

Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners Volunteer Program

Do you love gardening or do you have family or friends that enjoy gardening and are looking for volunteer opportunities?

The CUMBERLAND COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION office will be offering Master Gardeners' Training in 2009. The training will be held on Thursday mornings, January 15, 2009 – May 21, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The Extension Master Gardeners' program is an educational program designed to enhance public education in consumer horticulture. Master Gardener Volunteers provide educational assistance to the citizens of the county concerning lawns, fruits, vegetables, trees, and ornamentals.

Applications are now being accepted for the 2009 training. There is a cost of $90.00 for the class, which includes the Master Gardener training manual, as well as class supplies. For additional information and to request an application, please contact Shauna Haslem, Extension Agent, Urban Horticulture. You may reach Shauna at 910-321-6870 or by email at shauna_haslem@ncsu.edu.

Another Way To Aid Fayetteville Urban Ministry

We all know that the FAYETTEVILLE URBAN MINISTRY AND SALVATION ARMY work together to brighten the holidays for local residents in need. The Fayetteville Urban Ministry also makes Honor Cards available at this time of year. The cards sell for $5, and the image for this year's card is created by artist William Mangum. County employees are invited to a reception on November 14 to meet Mr. Mangum. (See the adjacent invitation.)

Here's how they work. You buy an Honor Card, and mail it, with your own message, to the friend you want to honor. The recipient will know that you have honored them by contributing to Fayetteville Urban Ministry (all the proceeds from Honor Cards go to fund the various programs of the Urban Ministry.) And they'll have a beautiful card to keep that will continue to remind them of your high esteem for them – and for your community.

If you would like to buy Honor Cards, contact Cathy Barkley at 867-9135.

Familiar to Army Families, ACS Comes to DSS

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICES (ACS) now has a representative at the CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES. The representative is located on the 1st floor at Reception Desk 11 of the Department at 1225 Ramsey Street.

Army Community Services provides assistance to military members and their families to include retirees, reservists and National Guard.

For more information on services provided by ACS, please contact Enausa Davis-Robinson - the Outreach Program Coordinator assigned to CCDSS - at 677-2934.

DSS Wins Award

THE NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES awarded a Best Practice Award to the Cumberland County EScanX Committee for cost-saving measures and improvements in efficiency last month at the 87th Annual Social Services Institute.

The award was presented for the project titled "The Time Is Now for a Case Management System." EScanX is the automated, paperless case management system currently used in the Food and Nutrition (aka Food Stamp) program. Over the past three years, Cumberland County DSS has experienced a 20% increase in those caseloads.

The Cumberland County DSS is in the process of expanding EScanX to the Medicaid program. Congratulations to all involved in making EScanX an award-winning success!

DSS Continues to Partner With Our Military Community

The 43rd Security Forces Squadron hosted a picnic for DSS foster families at Pope's Woodland Park. Our families received a hearty greeting from Col. John McDonald, 43rd Airlift Wing Commander and Tech. Sgt. Steven Kennedy. Among the attractions were a smokehouse simulation, crime dog and weapons demonstration, a visit from "McGruff" and many other activities including a tour of a C-130 aircraft, a rare treat for our children as well as adult attendees.

The purpose of the picnic was not only to show foster children and their families how much our military community cares about them, but also to provide them with a unique learning experience. The 43rd, just as with other units, has been plagued with deployments, but they still find time to demonstrate their patriotism and compassion for children.

DSS continues to focus on creative solutions to improve opportunities for teens in foster care. AT&T sponsored a "Career Day" for our recent high school graduates. This day included a series of workshops designed to assist our teens with their transition into the work force. Topics included interviewing skills, resume building, professional imagery and over all tips on what is expected of a corporate employee. Two teens have since successfully completed AT&T's five-week customer service training program and are full time employees. DSS is so excited to have access to the resources of these community partners. Information about both these events was presented to the Social Services Board.

November is Adoption Awareness Month

ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the thousands of children waiting in foster care for permanent, loving families. An unprecedented number of communities across the nation will be hosting activities in order to highlight the needs of waiting children. The following activities have been planned by DSS to celebrate this exciting month.
This years theme is "It's a Family Affair".

Nov 3, 2008 Agency Breakfast
Nov 3, 2008 thru Nov 30, 2008 Agency Adoption Fact Contest
Nov 15, 2008 DSS Adoption Fair @ True Vine Ministries
5315 Morganton Rd 9:00am-12:00pm
Nov 18, 2008 DSS/CHS Adoption Skating Party
Nov 20, 2008 Adoption/Foster Care "Evening With Our Stars Pageant"
Adoption Displays @ various Cumberland County libraries
Adoption PSA's on local radio stations and Fayetteville Observer

Please contact Sandra Robinson p11 @ 677-2897 if you are interested in Adoption or any of this month's activies.

Come and Get 'Em!

Flu season is coming up fast. Some county employees have already gotten their flu shot, since the Flu Shot Clinic had two dates in late October to administer the shot. But there are still two chances for you to get your shot. The shots will be given on Friday, November 7, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Cumberland County Courthouse, Room 119 and on Thursday, November 13, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room at the Mental Health offices at Executive Place. For employees and their dependents older than 9 years of age, the flu shots are free.

Be sure you bring your current BCBS Healthcare card and a picture ID. If you are unable to attend one of the dates above, you can go to your primary care physician to get your shot, and if you get the flu shot only, there should be no charge.

The flu is more serious than a cold, especially for the high risk group, which includes people over 65, or anyone with heart disease, diabetes, kidney or blood disorders, or an impaired immune system. Don't risk it – get your shot.

Stay Well By Washing Your Hands!

Despite the threat of getting sick during cold and flu season, less Americans say they are regularly washing their hands.

The fourth Clean Hands Report Card® issued by The Soap and Detergent Association, gives Americans a "C-minus" for their hand hygiene habits, the same grade they received back in 2006.

The Report Card is based on a series of hygiene-related questions asked of 916 Americans during a telephone survey conducted in August 2008 by Echo Research. Among the findings of SDA's 2008 survey:

- Only 85 percent say they always wash their hands after going to the bathroom (down from 92 percent in 2006).
- 46 percent of respondents wash their hands 15 seconds or less. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and SDA recommends washing with soap at least 15-20 seconds.
- 39 percent surveyed seldom or never wash their hands after coughing or sneezing (compared to 36 percent in 2006).
- 35 percent don't always wash before eating lunch (in 2006, 31 percent failed to wash up before lunch.

"Americans should prepare for the onslaught of cold and flu season," said Nancy Bock, SDA Vice President of Education. "Cleaning your hands regularly throughout the day can help keep you out of the doctor's office or the emergency room."

The CDC reports that each year in the United States, on average:

- More than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications.
- 20,000 of those hospitalized are children younger than 5 years old.
- 36,000 people die from flu.

SDA produces the annual Report Card to raise awareness of National Clean Hands Week, Sept. 21-27, which touts handwashing as the easiest path to staying healthy. Clean Hands Week is sponsored by the Clean Hands Coalition (www.cleanhandscoalition.org), an alliance of public and private partners working together to create and support coordinated, sustained initiatives to significantly improve health and save lives through clean hands.

From the Employee Assistance Program:

HOLIDAY SURVIVAL TIPS

10 basic strategies to more gracefully survive holiday stress.

Are expectations of happiness in the holidays making you sad?
Do you want to be happier and healthier this holiday season?
Would you like to enhance your holiday stress management skills?

This holiday season will be stress filled. World economic swings and terrorism have created conditions that have changed our holiday celebrations. Attitudes towards travel, being with family, celebration in the face of fear and sadness, will make this year's holiday season different than in years past. Adjustments will help to create new ways of participating in the holiday events. These can be both positive and negative. Consider new traditions in self-care. Search for community support that will open your heart to the joys that are possible in this season.

Remember the things that are the most stressful are the things that you care the most about, but have the least control over. World events, the economy, the way people respond, and our families (and children) are major stressors that we wish we could control, but often cannot.

1. Schedule Time for Self-Care!

Regular exercise and time for stress management are a must. Find what techniques work best for you, and use these tools. This is non-negotiable time devoted for your health and well being.

2. Eat Well

Moderation is the key. Do not use alcohol or drugs for stress management. Do not "over" celebrate. Avoid fast foods.

3. Avoid Caffeine

Minimize the impact of caffeine on your life.

4. Plan the Holiday...

Set some limits Do not over spend your financial and emotional resources.

5. Control Your Expectations of:

Happiness, Joy, Sadness, and Loneliness

6. Be Nice to Others

Give compliments and smile. Around negative, anxious, or rude people, take a breath and remember that you do not need to get pulled into other people's holiday misery or their craziness.

7. Reach Out for Support

Talk with "stable" friends or family, or clergy, or mental health counselors.

8. Humor Helps...

Have Fun. Laugh daily, if possible.

9. Stay in the Present!

Mentally and emotionally, do not be consumed by things that happened in the past or fear events in the future. Enjoy the people you are with and make the very best of the situation that you are in.

10. Find the True Spirit of the Holidays

Share "the Spirit" of this holiday with those people who you love or care about. Give love and support to the people of the world. Volunteer or go out of your way to be thoughtful and kind. A smile or a hug can go a long way. Sometimes it is just listening... Show others that they have value and that you are aware of their special qualities.

Even learn to let others give to you!

We have Self Guided exercises, taken directly from the Bestseller, *Guide to Stress Reduction* available to you in various formats. These serve as a powerful introduction to help you to develop awareness and offer the techniques proven to be effective in the areas of Stress Management, Wellness, and Productivity.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY GOVERNMENT... WORKING FOR YOU!

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

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/

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 Holidays

VETERANS DAY
Tuesday
Nov. 11

THANKSGIVING
Thursday & Friday,
Nov. 27 & 28

CHRISTMAS
Wednesday,
Thursday &
Friday
Dec. 24, 25 & 26