



CUMBERLAND COUNTY CONNECTION

County Names New Assistant Manager



JAMES LAWSON

County Manager James Martin has named HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR JAMES LAWSON as the county's new ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER of Human Resource Development and Support Services.

The announcement is part of a reorganization plan designed to strengthen two primary areas -- human resource development and communications.

The former Assistant County Manager for General and Support Services position has been vacant since January 2009. In announcing Lawson's promotion, Martin said, "We have spent a considerable period of time observing and analyzing the management issues that have arisen during this vacancy and have concluded that the position needed to encompass a new emphasis on staff development and training. James Lawson brings more than 24 years of personnel experience to the job, including almost 12 years as our human resources director."

Lawson, a graduate of Westover High School, served nine years in the Air Force working in military personnel. He joined the county's personnel department in 1995 and was named the Human Resources Director in November 1998. The county has more than 2,400 employees.

Lawson, 44, holds an associate's degree in resource management from the Community College of the Air Force and a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Maryland. He is now responsible for overseeing Human Resources, Animal Services,

Emergency Services, Central Maintenance and several other county departments.

"I look forward to this opportunity to serve alongside great leaders as we strive to meet the challenges facing our workforce and citizens," Lawson said.

The Season of Sharing

Food Drive

THIS YEAR CUMBERLAND COUNTY CONTINUES the long-standing tradition of participating in the Fayetteville Urban Ministry/Salvation Army Food Drive. This community service effort distributes food in mid-December to families in need. Food collection boxes will be put out at various county buildings by mid-November. The boxes will be collected the week of Dec. 6 so that the donations can be delivered to the joint Fayetteville Urban Ministry and Salvation Army warehouse by Dec. 13.

Rusty Long, the executive director of the Fayetteville Urban Ministry, thanks county employees for their generosity and offers these suggestions as you gather together your food donations. Plastic jars of peanut butter, jellies and pasta sauces are especially welcome, as are canned meats and fruits and sturdy bags or boxes of rice, pasta, dried beans and grits. Please, no glass containers of any kind

Blood Drive

The county's quarterly blood drive for the Cape Fear Valley Blood Donor Center is Thursday, Dec. 9. The Blood Donor Center will again set up the Bloodmobile at the Headquarters Library that morning from 9 to 11 a.m. The vehicle will then move to the Courthouse parking lot off Cool Spring Street from 1-4 p.m.



To sign up at the library, contact Susan Parrish at 483-7727 ext. 119. At the courthouse, contact Sally Shutt at 437-1921 or e-mail her at sshutt@cumberland.nc.us. For more information on blood donation, call the Blood Donor Center at 615-LIFE (5433).



JAMES MARTIN

County Manager's Message

Back in September, the COUNTY COMMISSIONERS changed the COUNTY'S PERSONNEL ORDINANCE. The county no longer has a separate funeral leave. Employees now accrue three additional sick leave days per year and are allowed to request sick leave from their supervisors in order to attend a funeral and deal with a death. Here are the responses to the employee questions we received about the change:

What is the new per-pay-period sick leave rate? The new sick leave credit is .577 days per pay period, or 4 hours and 37 minutes per pay period, which amounts to 15 sick days per year for an employee who works 40 hours a week. The earlier sick leave accrual was 12 days per year. The accrual rate is proportional for those who work less than 40 hours per week.

What constitutes "any relationship"? The following statement was added to the Personnel Ordinance under uses of sick leave: "Attendance at any funeral or memorial service for any decedent and for the bereavement of any loved one with which employee had any relationship." "Any relationship" means it is entirely within the discretion of the employee.

How long can you take and is there a limit to the amount of time someone can be out for funeral "sick" leave? How many times can you use the excuse of funeral leave? When someone uses sick leave excessively, we can require them to bring in a doctor's note? Will supervisors be able to require anything for the use of sick leave for funeral leave? The same rules apply as for other sick leave. The new ordinance says, "To avoid abuse of sick leave privileges, the department head may require a statement from a medical doctor or other acceptable proof that the employee was unable to work due to personal illness, family illness, or medical appointments. The department head may require any acceptable proof of the use of sick leave for attendance at a funeral service or bereavement." What is acceptable proof is going to depend on the circumstances and is mostly just a common sense concept.

So employees will be getting 15 days of sick leave, which in the long run means I'll be able to retire early because I don't use my "funeral leave" at all. Will it cost the county more money in the long run? Retirement benefits are paid by the Local Governmental Employees' Retirement System. The accumulated sick leave goes toward calculating an employee's creditable retirement service and is not paid in cash by the county.

If someone has a death in the family within the next 12 months and has not accrued the needed leave, can they still attend and use annual leave? Yes. Annual leave can be used for any purpose, subject to supervisory approval.

Will they be sanctioned if they do not have enough leave of any type and need to go on leave without pay? Leave without pay can be granted by any department head for any "cogent personal reason."

Why were employees not notified until the day of the meeting that this would be on the agenda? The Board of Commissioners' agendas and background information on each item are posted on the county web site prior to the commissioners' meetings. There was not a public hearing on the issue. The Commissioners' Policy Committee recommended at its September 2 meeting that the county eliminate funeral leave as a separate category of leave; add three days of accumulated annual sick leave in lieu of the existing funeral leave; and make funeral and bereavement leave eligible uses of sick leave. The *County Connection* was sent out on September 3 with the information on the recommendation. The commissioners approved the change on September 7.

If you have further questions about any leave policies, contact your department's Human Resources specialist.

In the next nine weeks, we will have a total of six days off for the following holidays – Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's. I hope you enjoy that time with your family and friends.

During the next two months, there will be several opportunities to share with others who are less fortunate in our community. Boxes for the annual food drive will be posted at various county buildings in the next two weeks and will be delivered to the Salvation Army/Fayetteville Urban Ministry warehouse, which this year will be the former Goody's building on Skibo Road, next to Hobby Lobby. A blood drive is set for December 9 at Headquarters Library and the Courthouse.

Finally, I want to extend to each of you my best wishes for a very happy and healthy holiday season.

Child Support Receives Awards

Several CUMBERLAND COUNTY CHILD SUPPORT DEPARTMENT MANAGERS attended the annual North Carolina Child Support Conference in August. George Shepherd, Child Support Supervisor I, accepted an outstanding performance award on behalf of Cumberland County Child Support Enforcement for exceeding its collection goal by 3.37 percent and earning fourth place in the state for increased collections for fiscal year 2009-2010.

Child Support Director Harry Austin Keating III, who previously served as the program manager of Cumberland and Harnett Child Support Enforcement, also received an outstanding performance award for leading his area in exceeding the



SHEPHERD



KEATING

collection goal for fiscal year 2009-2010.

The awards were for fiscal 2010 (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010) when the office was still state administered. For fiscal 2010, Cumberland had a total collection goal of \$35,772,907 and collected \$36,978,810, which is 103.37 percent of the goal. Cumberland County, with 24,495 active cases, had the highest percent of increase for any of the larger child support offices.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program Taking Applications

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES is accepting applications for its annual Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), created to assist households with heating costs during cold weather months.

Applications can be submitted at DSS from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, starting Nov. 1 and running through Nov. 12, with the exception of Veterans Day. The office will be closed for the holiday on Nov. 11. However, the office will extend hours on Nov. 10 until 6 p.m. to accept applications.

Applicants must bring in verification of income, Social Security, photo identification, and a current bank statement, if applicable. Households that are determined eligible will receive an energy payment in February.

For more information on the Low Income Energy Assistance Program, call the LIEAP information line at 677-2821. The line will be active through Nov. 30.

A second program, the Crisis Intervention Program may be available for more urgent energy assistance needs as funding is appropriated. The Salvation Army takes CIP applications at 1047 Southern Avenue. Please call 307-0359 for more information on the CIP program.

DSS Opens Call Center

ON OCT. 19, THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES started routing all calls through its new call center, which is designed to improve the agency's call efficiency. DSS began piloting the new call center back in September. Callers who need to report changes to their Food and Nutrition cases or who have questions about their benefits are directed to a bank of income maintenance technicians who are trained to handle these calls. The techs notify the caseworkers of the activity on the cases and mail out any required paperwork to the customers. This will save time for the callers as well as the caseworkers.



The Oct. 6 "Fall Into Work" Job Fair was a big success with 93 vendors and 4,700 job seekers attending. Willie Johnson of the Department of Social Services shares information with two job fair participants.

Register of Deeds Provides Birth Certificates from Across N.C.

THE REGISTER OF DEEDS OFFICE is participating in the new Statewide Birth Certificate Issuance Program, which enables Cumberland County residents to obtain a copy of a certified birth certificate for individuals born anywhere in North Carolina from 1972 to the present. The Register of Deeds is the legally authorized agent of the State Registrar to issue copies of certificates from the Statewide Birth Database, which is maintained by the State Vital Records Office in Raleigh.

“We are pleased to be able to offer this new service to Cumberland County residents. It will allow people to access their birth certificates in a more efficient and cost-effective way,” said Register of Deeds Lee Warren. Cost for the service is \$24 to research the certificate in the state registry and includes one copy of the certificate. Additional certificates from the same search will be \$15 each. The cost for a certificate of a person born in Cumberland County remains \$10 each.

County residents who would like to take advantage of this service are encouraged to go to the Register of Deeds Office Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 678-7775 or visit www.ccrd.org.



Health Dept Offers Flu Shots

THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT is offering seasonal flu shots to anyone 6 months and older. The department's Immunization Clinic is also offering the high-dose seasonal flu vaccine for individuals 65 years and older. Both the regular seasonal flu and the high-dose version include the H1N1 vaccine. Clinic hours are Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. until noon and 1 to 4 p.m. On Fridays, the clinic is open 8 a.m. to noon.

The cost of the seasonal flu vaccine is \$35. Medicare, Medicaid, N.C. Health Choice and Blue Cross Blue Shield will be filed with no cost to the client. The high-dose vaccine is \$50 and billable to Medicare or Blue Cross Blue Shield.



Bragg and Pope Military Spouses Eligible for Spring Semester Grants

SPOUSES OF ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL stationed at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base are encouraged to apply immediately for Career Advancement Account grants through the Cumberland County Workforce Development Center. Funds are still available for eligible military spouses registering for spring semester classes.

Military spouses who meet the grant requirements can receive up to \$6,000 for expenses such as tuition, fees, books and supplies directly related to post-secondary education and training. This grant program can assist individuals with obtaining associate's or bachelor's degrees, as well as paying for credentialing or licensing fees.

This is a great opportunity to develop a mobile career that is transferrable worldwide. Approved career fields are health care, education, financial services, information technology, hospitality, human resources, business administration, homeland security, social work, paralegal studies and construction.

Eligibility requirements are posted under the CAA link on the Workforce Development Board's Web site at www.cumberlandwdb.com. For more information, call 321-6442.



Adoption Awareness Fair

NOVEMBER IS ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH, and the Cumberland County Department of Social Services will celebrate with an Adoption Awareness Fair on Nov. 13 at the Cliffdale Recreation Center, 6404 Cliffdale Rd. The event runs from 10 a.m. to noon and will feature food, games and activities.

Adoptive parents and social workers will be on hand to answer questions about requirements for adoption and to explain the process. There are many children in our county and throughout the state who are patiently waiting for loving families to make a lifelong commitment to them. For more information, contact Sandra Robinson at 677-2897.

Volunteers Needed for Guardian ad Litem

VOLUNTEERS are needed to advocate for children who have been abused or neglected and are placed in the Department of Social Services custody by a Cumberland County Judge. Guardian ad Litem volunteers are instrumental in helping children secure a safe, nurturing, and permanent home for the remainder of their childhood. Volunteers must submit an application, pass a criminal background check and complete 30 hours of training, including four hours of court observation. After completing the required training, the volunteers are sworn in as officers of the court and assigned their first case.

Interested individuals can call 910-321-3822 for more information or go to www.CumberlandCountyGAL.com.

Change a Life — Change the World

Cumberland County Department of Social Services
Celebrates

ADOPTION AWARENESS MONTH

WHEN: Saturday, Nov. 13, 2010

WHERE: Cliffdale Recreation Center
6404 Cliffdale Road • 10:00 AM—12:00 PM

This event will provide the opportunity to talk with adoptive parents and social workers concerning the following:

- Requirements for adoption
- CCDSS NO COST Adoption Process
- Info on local community children's services
- Food, games and activities
- Free and open to Military and General Public



For more information contact Sandra Robinson at (910) 677-2897 or P11@ccdssnc.com

Adopt a Pet

If you are looking for a pet, then ANIMAL SERVICES encourages you to drop by the shelter on Corporation Drive. The two animals pictured here are available to a loving home. The female tabby (C-263) is named Stripes. She weighs about 10 pounds and is not spayed. The mixed-breed male dog(#410) weighs about 50 pounds and is unneutered. He's not quite one year old.

Call Animal Services at 910-321-6852 or visit http://www.co.cumberland.nc.us/animal_services/adoptable_animals.aspx.



Suzanne Laurie, Animal Services Office Support III, shares a laugh with Sarah Thompson, a Cumberland County public defender, who adopted the poodle in her arms at the Oct. 2 Howl-o-ween Canine Custom Contest to benefit the Animal Services Emergency Medical Fund and the Safe Havens Supervised Visitation Center. Two shelter dogs found new homes during the event.

Veterans Services To Host Nov. 6 Town Hall Meeting

IN CELEBRATION OF VETERANS DAY, Veterans Services is hosting a town hall meeting at 1 p.m. on Nov. 6 in the Pate Room of Headquarters Library, 300 Maiden Lane.

There will be an overview of Department of Veterans Affairs benefits and programs, to include the new rules on Agent Orange presumptive conditions and new statutes on applying for post traumatic stress disorder. The program will include a special presentation on PTSD and the Vet Center. After the overview presentations, the floor will be opened for questions. This meeting is open to all veterans, relatives, and friends of veterans who would like more information about the VA.

The Cumberland County Veteran's Council is sponsoring the annual Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 6 beginning at 11 a.m. at the corner of Hay Street and Bragg Boulevard. The parade will travel down Hay Street to Person Street ending at the Courthouse. This year's parade will honor Purple Heart recipients. The council is expecting more than 100 parade entries. We hope you will make it a day and attend both of these events.

For more information, call (910)-677-2970.

Master Gardener Deadline

NOV. 5 IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE for Cumberland County's Master Gardener program. A new training class will start Jan. 13 and run through April 21. The class will meet every Thursday from 9 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Auditorium, located at 301 East Mountain Drive. For information, contact Shauna Haslem at 910-321-6870 or shauna_haslem@ncsu.edu.

HIV: A Deadly But Preventable Disease

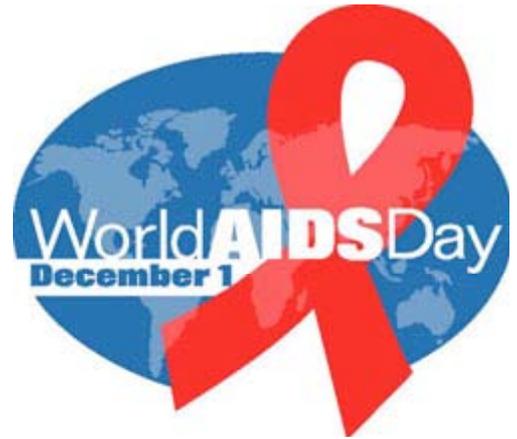
Every nine-and-a-half minutes, another person in the United States becomes infected with HIV; this means 56,300 new infections each year. More than 14,000 people with AIDS still die each year in the U.S.

Dec. 1 is World AIDS Day. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in five of the more than one million people in this country living with HIV remains unaware of his or her infection. Many may be unknowingly transmitting HIV to others.

Please join Cumberland County's HIV Task Force on the first Tuesday of each month at the Community Foundation Building on Green Street at noon to help mobilize efforts in continuing the fight against HIV and providing support for those infected and affected with HIV/AIDS. For more information, please contact Phyllis McLymore-Moore at 433-3894.

The impact in the United States is most severe among gay and bisexual men, African Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos:

- Men who have sex with men account for more than half of new HIV infections and nearly half of people living with HIV.
- African Americans are 12 percent of the U.S. population but make up nearly half of both new HIV infections and people living with HIV. The rate of new HIV infections for black men is six times that of white men; for black women, it is 15 times that of white women.
- Hispanics/Latinos are 13 percent of the U.S. population, but make up 17 percent of new HIV infections and 18 percent of people living with HIV. The rate of new HIV infections for Hispanic/Latino men is more than twice that of white men and the rate for Hispanic/Latina women is four times that of white women.
- Cumberland County Health Department offers free and confidential testing Monday through Fridays and walk-ins are welcome.



Fair Makes Donation

The Cumberland County Agricultural Fair donated \$1,500 to the Cumberland County Cooperative Extension Service for use in its various programs. The fair showcases the service's 4-H, family and consumer services, horticulture, agricultural and livestock programs. Karen Long, left, Crown Center General Manager; Lisa Childers, Cooperative Extension Service Director; and Hubert Bullard, Cumberland County Fair Manager, are pictured.

Library News

West Regional Library Open

The Cumberland County Public Library & Information Center's West Regional Branch Library at 7469 Century Circle opened Oct. 2. The library, with 14,000 square feet, had a \$5.7 million budget that included construction, furnishings and its initial collection of nearly 55,000 books, CDs and DVDs. It is designed to be energy efficient.

Planning for the library began 15 years ago in anticipation of growth in west Cumberland County. During that time, the library system's Cliffdale and Hope Mills branches have seen increasing demands on their services.

The new branch is the first library in the system to implement technology that enables customers to check out materials on their own by placing materials on a designated pad and entering their library card number at the check-out station. Onscreen instructions will direct a customer to speak with staff if there is a problem with the account. Staff will still be on hand to check out books in the traditional manner upon request.



The library is also unique in that it is physically attached to New Century International Elementary School. Large glass doors separate the library from the school's media center during the school day, but after school hours, on weekends and during the summer, the doors are lifted and the media center's materials are accessible to the public. During those times, the public library staff oversee the media center.

West Regional Branch Library is open seven days a week, Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Sunday 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. For more information, please visit www.cumberland.lib.nc.us or call (910) 487-0440.



West Regional Branch Library Ribbon Cutting - (left to right) Rep. Marvin Lucas; Breeden Blackwell, former county commissioner; Commissioner Ed Melvin; Library Trustees Mary Thomas, Sara VanderClute and Willie Wright; Library Director Jody Risacher; Commissioner Kenneth Edge; Library Trustees Robin MacGregor and Ole Sorensen; and Commissioner Philip Gilfus

Bordeaux Library Receives Grant for Innovations

There are some exciting changes on the horizon at the Bordeaux Branch Library. The library is the smallest and oldest branch in the library system. The branch located on Village Drive received \$98,370 in grant funding from the State Library of North Carolina.

The changes include adding 17 public computers to its computer lab, bringing the total to 26 computers. Four laptops will also be available for use in the library. The children's area is being relocated to another section of the library. And, the branch will be equipped with Radio Frequency Identification technology that will allow customers to use self check-out just as they are used to doing at their grocery stores.

Friends Book Sales

Stock up on all your reading needs with books and magazines donated by the Friends of the Library and local residents. Entrance to the book sale is through the back door near the benches by the creek. Cash or check only.

Members Only Book Sale

Tuesday, Nov. 16 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Headquarters Library

Public Book Sale

Saturday, Nov. 20 from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Headquarters Library

COMING UP @ THE CROWN

NOVEMBER

- 4-7 Holly Day Fair
- 4-7 Disney on Ice
- 6 Sinbad
- 9 FireAntz vs. Huntsville
- 13 Taste of Home Cooking Show
- 17 Army Field Band
- 19 FireAntz vs. Louisiana
- 20 FireAntz vs. Louisiana
- 25 FireAntz vs. Knoxville
- 27-28 Heart of Christmas Show

**HOLLY
DAY
FAIR**



**Disney
ON ICE**



DECEMBER

- 3 FireAntz vs. Mississippi
- 4 FireAntz vs. Mississippi
- 4-5 Gun & Knife Show
- 5 Nutcracker
- 10 Disney Live, "Mickey's Magic Playhouse"
- 12 Nutcracker
- 17 FireAntz vs. Knoxville
- 17 "The 12 Days of Christmas"
featuring Vince Gill & Amy Grant,
presented by Community Concerts
- 18 FireAntz vs. Columbus
- 18 Elite Cheer and Dance Competition
- 25 FireAntz vs. Augusta
- 26 FireAntz vs. Columbus
- 31 FireAntz vs. Huntsville

Start Preparing For Winter Weather

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released its 2010 U.S. Winter Outlook predicting extreme weather patterns for different regions of the country this winter, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is reminding individuals to get ready for winter storms and extreme cold. Americans can find helpful tips and recommendations to help them get prepared at <http://www.Ready.gov/america/beinformed/winter.html>.

Severe winter weather can include snow or subfreezing temperatures, strong winds and ice or heavy rain storms. An emergency supply kit both at home and in the car will help prepare people for winter power outages and icy or impassable roads.



An emergency supply kit should include a three-day supply of food and water, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio and extra flashlights and batteries. Thoroughly check and update your family's emergency supply kit and add the following supplies in preparation for winter weather:

- Rock salt to melt ice on walkways;
- Sand to improve traction;
- Snow shovels and other snow removal equipment;
- And adequate clothing and blankets to help keep you warm.
- Ensure your family preparedness plan and contacts are up to date and exercise your plan. Learn about the emergency plans that have been established in your area by your state and local government, and ensure your home and car are prepared for the winter weather.
- Finally, everyone should get familiar with the terms that are used to identify a winter storm hazard and discuss with your family what to do if a winter storm watch or warning is issued. Terms used to describe a winter storm hazard include the following:
 - Freezing Rain creates a coating of ice on roads and walkways.
 - Sleet is rain that turns to ice pellets before reaching the ground. Sleet also causes roads to freeze and become slippery.
 - Winter Weather Advisory means cold, ice and snow are expected.
 - Winter Storm Watch means severe weather such as heavy snow or ice is possible in the next day or two.
 - Winter Storm Warning means severe winter conditions have begun or will begin very soon.
- For more information and winter preparedness tips, please visit: <http://www.ready.gov/america/beinformed/winter.html>.



Tricks and Treats!

Halloween arrived two days early on Friday, Oct. 29, as County employees joined in the fun. Here are some photos from the Courthouse.



Monica Gross



Laura Blackley as the Tooth Fairy



Rupert Langdon as a cowboy



Carol St. Louis as Lady Gaga



Gilligan's Island visits the Tax Office: Sandra Napier as Mrs. Howell; Angela Brunson as Mary Ann; Ed Brooks as The Skipper; Anthony McLaurin as Gilligan; and Felicia Buczynski as Ginger.



Jody Elrod as Paula Deen



Denise Taylor





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Cumberland County Government... Working for you!

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/)

EVERYONE NEEDS A REAL FRIEND NOW AND THEN. The kind of friend who can be trusted to keep a confidence, the kind of friend who 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

Nov. 11 — Veterans Day
Nov. 25-26 — Thanksgiving
Dec. 24 and 27 — Christmas
Dec. 31 — New Year's



Don't Forget to Vote!

Polls will open at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 2 for the general election and remain open until 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact the Board of Elections at 678-7733.