



BRUNSWICK COUNTY EMPLOYEE EDITION

Your Resource for Recent Happenings

Employee Newsletter
2011 Series, January Issue

A Message From Our County Manager, Marty Lawing:

I hope that the New Year has started on a positive note for everyone and that as 2011 unfolds that you will meet with success in achieving your personal and occupational goals.

You are probably aware that the Board of Commissioners adopted a Code of Conduct on December 6, 2010 that is applicable to all county officials, employees and agents. The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines for ethical standards of conduct by setting forth those acts or actions that are incompatible with the best interests of the county and the proper operation of democratic government. A copy of the Code of Conduct has been placed on the Brunswick County Intranet for employees that have access to the county's network. If you do not have access to the Intranet you may obtain a hard copy from your department director.

You will find that the content of the code consist of very basic and common sense standards that can be complied with without putting forth much effort. Nonetheless, every employee is expected to read and understand the code and adhere to the standards. In summary, the code of ethics generally prohibits any county official or employee from being party to or acquiring an interest in an agreement or contract with the county, using their position or county facilities for private gain or use or the disclosure of confidential information for purposes of advancing his/her financial or personal interest. In addition, county officials and employees shall not engage in private employment that is incompatible with their official duties with the county or serve on any county board except where expressly required by statute; solicit, accept or receive any gift that could reasonably be expected to influence the performance of their duties or as a reward for any official action on their part and shall not grant any special treatment to any citizen beyond that which is available to any other citizen.

The Code contains provisions for filing complaints for alleged violations and investigation procedures for such alleged violations.

One of the County's ten Core Values is "Integrity is Paramount". If you find yourself in a situation in which the appropriate action is unclear, I would recommend that you reference the Code of Conduct for guidance. The Code of Ethics is not intended to place a hardship on anyone, it is simply a tool to ensure the equitable and impartial administration and delivery of county services.

2008 Retirement Annual Benefits Statements for Active Employees Will Not Be Available After March 31, 2011

The North Carolina Retirement Systems is preparing to generate 2010 Annual Benefits for active employees who contributed to their Retirement System account as of December 31, 2010.

In preparation for the new statements, 2008 statements will only be available in personal OR-

BIT accounts until March 31, 2011. The 2008 statement will be permanently removed from ORBIT after this date and will not be retained by the Retirement Systems Division.

It is important for members to be aware of this deadline. Employees are encouraged to view, download or print their 2008 statement if they have not yet done so since it will not be available after March 31, 2011. 2010 statements are scheduled for posting by the end of May 2011.

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Brunswick County MISSION STATEMENT

The government of Brunswick County, North Carolina exists to promote and sustain a superior quality of life. In partnership with our communities, we pledge to deliver cost effective services in a personal, respectful and innovative manner, to our residents and visitors alike.

VISION STATEMENT

To provide essential services to support the development of a sustainable and prosperous community with limited bureaucratic intrusion.

CORE VALUES

- Accountability
- Customer Service/Trust
- Dignity/Respect
- Diversity
- Environment
- Integrity is Paramount
- Professionalism
- Safety
- Stewardship of Public Resources
- Teamwork

AUL Sending Informational Only W-2's

Mark III, our optional insurances broker, has informed us that American United Life Insurance Company (AUL) will be sending out a W-2 to anyone who received short term disability benefits from them. Mark III wanted employees to know that the W-2's are for **information purposes only** as the benefits are non-taxable and that employees are not required to submit them with their tax returns. If you have any questions then please contact AUL Customer Service on (800) 553-5318.

Prudential 401(k) Funds Update:

The Board of Trustees of the North Carolina Supplemental Retirement Plans approved the closure of frozen mutual funds when the two supplemental retirement plans established the North Carolina funds investment options in 2008. The old mutual funds will now be closed on Labor Day weekend, September of 2011.

The Prudential 401 (k) and Deferred Compensation plans were revamped in 2008 to establish new investment funds. Members at that time had the option of leaving all existing 401 (k) and Deferred Compensation monies in the existing mutual funds or transferring (mapping) these sums to the new investments that were designated for North Carolina funds. The old mutual funds were frozen in that members could not

invest additional monies in these funds. The vast majority of plan members opted to transfer their balances to the new investment funds. However, nearly 3,000 members opted to remain with the old mutual funds.

Members who will be affected by the closure of the old funds will receive information from the Board of Trustees and Prudential in the next several months. Plan members will be receiving communications about their investment choices and will have the option of transferring their money to the current investment in the Plans on their own before the September cutoff.

Please contact the NC Retirement Systems call center if you have any questions on (877) 627-3287.

Change to Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Eligible Healthcare Expenses

Effective January 1, 2011, certain over-the-counter (OTC) medications and drugs without a prescription will NOT be reimbursable through Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA). The list of items that will require a prescription includes, but is not limited to acne medicine; allergy medicine; cough, cold & flu medicine; eye drops; indigestion medicine; laxatives; nasal sprays, drops; ointment for cuts, burns, rashes; pain relievers. Items that will remain eligible without a prescription include, but are not limited to band aids, birth control, braces & supports, contact lens solutions & supplies, elastic bandages & wraps, first aid supplies, and reading glasses.

The IRS released guidance allowing FSA **debit cards** to automatically adjudicate over-the-counter drug and medicine purchases when accompanied by a prescription and dispensed by a pharmacist. The effective date of this change was extended to January 16, 2011, to allow merchants to make the necessary changes to their systems for card transactions. The guidance states that Health Care FSA debit cards may only be used for certain OTC medicines and drugs if the following conditions are met:

- A legal prescription is presented to a pharmacist
- A pharmacist dispenses the OTC item pursuant to state laws
- A prescription number is assigned to the item
- The transaction is not approved without a prescription number
- Detailed records are kept by the merchant, in case of an audit

At this time, it is unclear how many pharmacies will permit dispensing of OTC items in this way; however, no changes will be required to debit card systems to accommodate these conditions. For more details or if you have questions, see IRS Notice 2011-5 or contact Brunswick County's administrator, Flexible Benefit Administrators Inc, at (757) 340-4567 or (800) 437-FLEX.



IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO GET A FLU SHOT

Usually spread when infected people cough or sneeze, flu can spread rapidly in a community unless people take precautions. Flu vaccine helps protect people from the illness, and simple precautions, like frequent hand washing and covering one's mouth and nose when one coughs or sneezes can help prevent spread of flu.

The Health Department has plenty of vaccine both regular and high dose (for those over 65 years of age) available for anyone who would still like to get their shots. The current vaccine protects from H1N1 as well as the regular flu. There is also flu mist for persons under 49.

Please call the Flu Line at 253-2344 and leave your name and phone number if you want a shot. You will be called and informed when to come to the Health Department in the Government Complex in Bolivia, NC.

SPOTLIGHT ON EMPLOYEES!

During the last couple of months there have been several special Milestone Service Anniversaries. They are commended for their continuous service and loyalty to Brunswick County. What a special Achievement!

- Carol Mercer, Tax Administration—30 Years
- Emily Grissett, Title II Home Care—20 Years
- Dewayne Varnam, Environmental Health—20 Years
- Teresa Joyner, WIC-Client Services—20 Years
- Darris Small, 211 Water Treatment Plant— 15 Years
- Renee Phillips, Tax Administration—15 Years
- Betty Lewis, WIC –Client Services—10 Years
- Kathy Davis, Management Info. Systems—10 Years
- Sheila Rivenbark, Service Center—10 Years
- Anetta Bryant, WIC-Client Services—10 Years
- Kathy Walters, Water Administration—5 Years
- Susan Fought, Water –Field Operations—5 Years
- Rosann Feigenbutz, Water– Customer Service—5 Years
- Kimberly Garcia, Detention Center—5 Years
- William Caulk, Sheriff Dept.—5 Years
- Aaron Hewett, West Regional Wastewater—5 Years
- John Hobgood, Geographic Info. Systems—5 Years
- Pamela Stanley, Register of Deeds—5 Years

During the last couple of months there have been some New Fulltime Additions to the Brunswick County staff.

We welcome them and look forward to working together to provide superior customer service to our citizens!

- ◆ Kara McPherson on November 20, 2010 in DSS Admin.
- ◆ David Pena on December 2, 2010 in DSS Admin.
- ◆ Clint Nunnery on December 12, 2010 in EMS
- ◆ Gary Boehmer on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Hilburn Evans on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Matthew Chism on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Matthew Blake on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Michael Bowman on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Ronald Hockett on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Shavonne Collins on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ William Hickman on December 13, 2010 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Dustin Leopard on December 27, 2010 in Operations
- ◆ Ashley Swaim on December 28, 2010 in Central Comm. Ctr.
- ◆ Princess Dilworth on December 28, 2010 in Central Comm. Ctr.
- ◆ Terry Raper on December 28, 2010 in Central Comm. Ctr.
- ◆ Rachel Linton on January 3, 2011 in DSS Admin.
- ◆ Summer Nicholas on January 3, 2011 in DSS Admin.
- ◆ Kimberly Know on January 5, 2011 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ Debora Wilson on January 10, 2011 in Sheriff Dept.
- ◆ Kenneth Scott on January 10, 2011 in Detention Ctr.
- ◆ James Caton on January 19, 2011 in Detention Ctr.

Brunswick County appreciates all the hard work that the following people have contributed and will miss them in Retirement!!

- ◆ James "Tarry" Benton in Utilities Retired December 2010
- ◆ Donald Alderfer in the Health Dept. Retired January 2011
- ◆ Mary "Libby" Brown in Register of Deeds Retired January 2011
- ◆ Charlie Wilson in the Sheriff's Dept. Retired February 2011



Captain Charlie Wilson is saying his farewells to the Sheriff's Office after many years of hard work. He has committed countless hours and much dedication to all Brunswick County citizens. Charlie Wilson began as an auxiliary Brunswick County Sheriff's Deputy in April of 1988 and made Law Enforcement his full-time career on January 15th of 1989. Wilson worked as a uniformed road patrol deputy and received a promotion to a Shift Sergeant in 1992. He was promoted in 1997 to First Sergeant over the Road Patrol Division and then promoted in January of 2001 to Lieutenant over Uniform Services. Wilson received his promotion to Captain over Special Services on June 30th of 2008 where he currently holds the position over Special Services. Captain Wilson is also over the Marine Patrol Division. He has helped organize this division into a seasonal unit and has dealt with a 24/7 on call schedule for any emergencies on the waterways throughout the county for the Sheriff's Office Air Boat. Captain Wilson first received training on this boat in Florida over ten years ago. He was also a previous team leader on the SWAT Team.

Captain Wilson has two children, Charlie and Jennifer along with three beautiful grandchildren; Kristlyn, Allen and Lil Roy. On behalf of the Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Ingram would like to thank Captain Wilson for all of his years of dedication and wish him good luck to a pleasant retirement.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS!



Pictured: Jere McMillan receiving a plaque from Commissioner Warren

Jere McMillan, Lead Maternity Care Coordinator in the Health Department, received the first annual award for Outstanding Achievements and Contributions to the Community at the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration that was held on Thursday, January 13, 2011. Jere was nominated by a fellow employee who shared some of the special ways that Jere gave back to the community. Some things that were shared include, "She is the chair of the Minority Infant Mortality Task force which has worked toward reducing infant mortality in Brunswick County. The Task Force also addresses Health Disparities within the County such as prostate and breast cancer." Jere's involvement with this group and many areas of the community are commended.

Parks & Recreation has named two employees of the year for 2010. Pictured below are the employees that were chosen. Great Job!!!



Pictured: Brandon McKenna, Park Supervisor, receiving a plaque from Jim Pryor



Pictured: Judi Pridgen, Administrative Asst., receiving a plaque from Jim Pryor

Angela Reaves, Laboratory Manager in the Health Department, was recently selected as Laboratorian of the Year by the North Carolina Public Health Association. The award is given in recognition of outstanding laboratory service in the field of Public Health. Ms. Reaves has worked in the Lab at the Brunswick County Public Health Department for almost 9 years. Ms. Reaves was recognized for her accomplishment at the December Board of Health meeting.



Pictured: Angela with Phil Tripp, Chair Brunswick County Board of Health.



Pictured: David Stanley with Phil Tripp, Chair Brunswick County Board of Health.

The staff of the Health Department recently selected David Stanley, III as Employee of the Quarter for October – December, 2010. Mr. Stanley is the Director of Environmental Health and has worked at the Health Department for 15 years.

The staff of the Health Department recently selected Cheri Dilgard as Employee of the Year for 2010. Ms. Dilgard is the Deputy Director of Nursing for the Health Department.



Pictured: Cheri with Phil Tripp, Chair Brunswick County Board of Health

Sharing A Life Saving Gift

Brunswick County sponsored a blood drive here at the Government Center on December 16th. The temporary closing of Hwy. 17 that morning delayed the arrival of the Red Cross staff, but they were quick to get everything set up once they arrived. Even with the delay, the blood drive was successful. The Red Cross registered 46 donors, 7 of which were first time donors, and 44 units were collected! American Red Cross Donor Recruitment Representative Tanya Tilley-Hall stated, "The efforts of Brunswick County Government have always been greatly appreciated and their support of the community blood drive program will go a long way toward replenishing blood supplies and ultimately saving lives." The American Red Cross provides numerous opportunities to donate in community blood drives throughout the year. To find one near you, visit www.redcrossblood.org/donating-blood. Thank you for your willingness to share this life saving gift.



WELLNESS CORNER

Wellness Survey Results

The results are in for the Wellness Survey! Thank you to the approximately 40% of employees who took the time to let us know your views. Brunswick County leadership and the Wellness committee will be using the survey results to help design, recommend and put in place Wellness programs going forward. Since the data is yours, the complete results can be found on the intranet site under the Human Resources department, Wellness tab. The quantitative results are on pages 1 through 12 and the comments are found on pages 12 through 53. Following are a few of the things we learned from you:

- Almost 70% of employees participating in the survey believe the clinic should be open more than 20 hours per week. The largest response to this question, 34%, believe the clinic should be open for 40 hours per week.
- Our off-shift employees would like the clinic open in the evenings so that they can take advantage of their services even if it is only a few times per week.
- Only 7% or 27 people were dissatisfied with the Health Risk Assessments while only 9.3% or 34 people were not satisfied with the Health Assessment report. This confirms that LivingWell Health Solutions heard your feedback from the employee meetings and made sure that they did a better job this time around. There is always opportunity for improvement though.
- Over 70% of you are satisfied with not having to clock out to go to the clinic, not having to pay a co-pay to use the clinic and not having to pay to have your lab work performed in the clinic.
- 92% of those responding believe that people should take responsibility and actions toward improving their health. Approximately 65% believe employees who participate in programs to improve their health should pay less for their health insurance compared to those who do not participate.
- Only about 11% believed the County should not have a Wellness program.
- Almost 70% believe that spouses and 63% that children, 15 years and older, on the County insurance should participate in the Brunswick County Wellness programs.
- While 68% preferred the use of a third party provider, like LivingWell, along with their private medical provider, approximately 51% would use the service if it was performed by the Health Department and their private medical provider. That means that many of you are okay with either option.
- Almost 74% would like to have an employee exercise facility / room on site and approximately 67% would like for the Cafeteria to provide healthier food choices such as fresh vegetables, fruits, lean meats, and grilled or baked foods instead of fried.
- Approximately 49% believe we should ban the use of all smoking and / or tobacco products on site with 27% voting neutral and 24% disagreeing.

Thank you again to everyone that participated. Your opinion matters!

A Message from Dianne Doherty, the Nurse Practitioner for the LivingWell On-Site Clinic

Dear Brunswick County Employees,

I have enjoyed meeting many of you through the clinic or on site of the complex. For those whom I have not had the pleasure, I would like to tell you a little bit about myself. I have 33 years experience employed with a Family Practice group located in Chatham Virginia, which is the county seat of Pittsylvania County (the largest county in VA).

I have been involved in the care and support of county employees. Preventative health, acute care and chronic illness have been the main focus of my career. I have received a warm welcome here and see so many similarities, so I feel at home.

My husband is a pharmacist and should be transferred to this area next month. We chose to live in the Leland area after visiting our son who has lived here for the past 12 years.

I would like to address the LivingWell clinic which is in the process of renovations and offering more services. Currently the clinic hours are Monday and Wednesday, 8 to 1 and Tuesday and Thursday, 7:30 to 12:30. It is our goal to better suit your needs and we are open to your suggestions.

Our main focus is on wellness and prevention, not replacing your primary care provider. We are also prepared to follow your chronic conditions and treat accordingly. Additional services include monthly B-12 injections, allergy injections and GYN evaluations, PAP smears with referrals for mammograms. Labs ordered by your physician can be drawn in the clinic and results will be faxed to your physician's office.

Clinic visits are scheduled by appt. and in most cases, I can see you the same day that you call. The appt. line is 1-866-959-9355.

Future plans, in partnership with the Wellness Committee, include correlating a nutritional and exercise program as well as diabetic education classes. Details will follow!



CURRENT EVENTS!

The Register of Deeds Office: A one-stop shop for passports in Brunswick County

The Brunswick County Register of Deeds Office is now the only authorized office in Brunswick County, and the only register of deeds office in the State of NC, where citizens can apply for a U. S. passport. Since it is a federally authorized passport agency, anyone, not just Brunswick County residents, can apply for a passport at the register of deeds office.

Until recently, anyone born in this county had to obtain a copy of their birth certificate from Vital Records in Raleigh at a cost of \$24.00 if they were applying for a passport. Today it will only cost \$10.00 per certified copy issued from my office.

Since I took office in December 2008, I along with staff members Dana Varnam & Larry Talbott have worked diligently on this project. With the help of County Attorney, Huey Marshall, Congressman Mike McIntyre and his assistant Mary Ellen Simmons, Don Simpkins, the director of the Office of Adjudication and his assistant Lidia Kiorkis, we have accomplished that goal. Effective December 13th, 2010, the US Department of State is allowing my office to accept county born residents' birth certificates.

A letter received from Barry J. Conway, Managing Director for Support Operations, Passport Services, states, "After reviewing Brunswick County's current procedures for issuing birth records, including the removal of all records from the internet and the introduction of a new certificate format, Passport Ser-

vices will once again accept Brunswick County records as primary evidence of U.S. citizenship." The letter goes on to state, "Because the new birth certificate format was made available starting May 1, 2009, Passport Services will only accept birth certificates issued on or after that date. The applicant's date of birth will not be a determining factor when considering the certificate's suitability. Any passport applicant with a Brunswick County birth record issued before May 1, 2009 will be required to submit either a North Carolina state issued birth certificate or a Brunswick, NC birth certificate issued on or after May 1, 2009."

I am delighted to know that the Department of State and Passport Services is entrusting my office to accept our county birth certificates as proof of US citizenship. Also stated in the letter, "The Department of State and Passport Services are pleased to be able to accept Brunswick County birth certificates again."

In addition to myself, there are four employees that are authorized passport agents; Dana Varnam, Deborah Malinchalk, Pamela Stanley and Larry Talbott. Each agent is required federal authorization by passport services and must follow strict federal guidelines.

For more information contact 910-253-2690, or email rod@brunscos.net.

Brenda M. Clemmons,
Brunswick County Registrar

Service Recognition

During the County Commissioner's meeting Monday night, February 21, 2011, they voted to change our Service Recognition policy. The revised policy can be found in the online personnel policy on the Intranet Site. Go to Departments, Human Resources and then Personnel Policies. The policy number, 465, is still the same. There are two primary changes to the policy. First, three years of service will no longer be recognized for a service recognition. The IRS does not recognize length of service under 5 years which could create a taxable award for those receiving a 3 year recognition. In addition, when compared to other employers (government or private industry), service recognition tends to begin at 5 years. Therefore, we made this change to be in alignment with IRS standards and industry comparison. The second change was to remove the detailed description of the awards provided. As many of you know, the pins were made of 14 kt. gold. Some were accentuated with blue sapphires and / or diamonds. This means the pins were expensive. If you put it in perspective, the total cost we were spending on pins could have, depending on the year, equated to one or possibly two headcount. The County Commissioners agreed that the pins were too expensive, but more importantly, that continuing to recognize the extended dedicated service of our employees was essential. Therefore, we will be reviewing other recognition options and will let everyone know when decisions are made regarding the recognition program. If you have an opinion that you would like to share regarding how we handle recognition in the future then please email Debbie Barnes on dbarnes@brunscos.net.

REMINDER: Your paycheck may have been affected by recent tax changes

The first reason is that a law was recently passed that will decrease payroll taxes for employees in 2011 by reducing your Social Security tax (FICA) withholding rate from 6.2% to 4.2%. Currently the decrease is for one year. The decrease in FICA taxes withheld from your check may increase your net pay.

The second reason is that the Federal Tax tables have changed as of January 1, 2011 and no longer include the "Making Work Pay" credit from 2009 and 2010. As a result, the amount of your federal tax withheld may be increased from 2010. The increase in federal taxes withheld from your check may decrease your net pay.

If you have any questions regarding your paycheck, please contact your department payroll administrator. If your department administrator is unable to resolve your questions, he/she will refer you to the proper individual. Thank you for your assistance with this matter.