



CountyLines

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Interact with youth to build their trust

We have all heard and read the statistics. One survey after another shows that our youth feel disengaged from and disinterested in government. What can be done about this?

I believe that we, as local elected officials, have a unique opportunity to help change this mindset.

Youth involvement in the 2008 presidential election was the highest in years, with polls showing that more than 52 percent of voters between the ages of 18-29 turned out. In 1996, only 37 percent of young voters actually voted in that year's presidential election.

How do we continue this trend?

One survey recently showed that children tend to have more trust in defined social institutions, such as family,

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President's Perspective by Mary Accor

Mary S. Accor



Cabarrus County Cooperative Extension Agent Carl Pless (second from right) talks with Sustainability Manager Kevin Grant about progress at the Elma C. Lomax Incubator Farm. The concept behind the farm is similar to a small business incubator project; the county offers classroom and hands-on instruction to help individuals interested in farming. Above, program participants help prepare soil for a "high tunnel" greenhouse, which will allow for the growth of summer crops in the winter.

Photo by Jason King

Sustainability takes root in Cabarrus

Vision of sustainable culture becoming a reality for county government; commissioners hope public follows the example

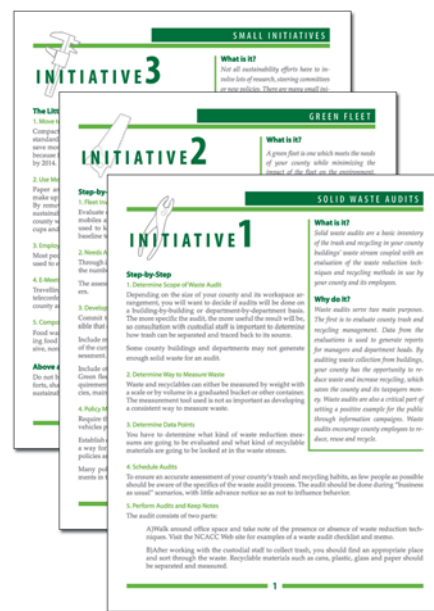
By Jason King

Assistant Communications Director

President Barack Obama told federal agencies in early October that he wants the federal government to set an example for the rest of the nation by reducing employees' travel and commutes, and pollution from federal facilities and fleet vehicles. It's a great plan, but it's several steps behind what a handful of North Carolina counties – including Cabarrus – are already doing.

The "Building Sustainable Counties" toolkit that attendees received upon checking in at the NCACC's 102nd Annual Conference included eight model initiatives for counties to become more sustainable. Two of those featured initiatives – Green Fleet and Green Purchasing – are merely a sample of Cabarrus County's sustainability efforts. With the strong support of the Board of Commissioners, the guidance of the county manager, and the dedication of employees involved in the effort, the county is getting the word out to its citizens about the county government's sustainability practices and hoping the public will follow.

Board of Commissioners Chairman Jay White said sustainability initiatives began to take root in the county when the



The NCACC sustainability toolkit distributed at the 102nd Annual Conference included eight model initiatives, which are available online at www.ncacc.org/toolkit.html.

board developed new mission and vision statements and goals to guide county government in its principals.

"We as a county have really had the idea of sustainability infused throughout county government," he said. White added that he believes that the county

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Accor names 9 to NCACC Board of Directors

NCACC President Mary Accor of Cleveland County announced in September her at-large appointments and her steering committee chairs for 2009-10.

Her at-large directors include several returnees to the NCACC Board of Directors and two newcomers. Past President Kitty Barnes (Catawba), Cleveland County Chair Jo Boggs and Currituck County Commissioner Owen Etheridge have previously served on the Board, while Granville Commissioner Tony Cozart and Dare Commissioner Virginia Tillet are newcomers.

Steering committee chairs are:

- Agriculture: Ray Jeffers, Person
- Environment: Chuck McGrady, Henderson
- Human Services: Viola Harris, Edgecombe
- Intergovernmental Relations: First Vice President Brian McMahan, Jackson
- Justice and Public Safety: Hubert Sealy, Robeson
- Public Education: Second Vice President Kenneth Edge, Cumberland
- Tax and Finance: President Elect Joe Bryan, Wake

The Board of Directors relies on steering committees for guidance and recommendations on issues within policy areas. Beginning this year, steering committees will meet quarterly to gather and consider information on emerging county-related issues, monitor the progress of the adopted legislative goals that emanated from their committee, and examine pending or proposed legislation that could impact county government.

Steering committees provide the greatest opportunity for individual county officials to become involved with the NCACC. Membership is open to all commissioners and county staff who might have a particular interest or expertise. NCACC staff provides administrative and technical support to each committee.

If you are interested in joining a committee, contact Alisa Cobb at (919) 715-2893 or alisa.cobb@ncacc.org. Commissioners may serve on more than one steering committee. If you served on a committee last year, you will remain on that committee unless you request to be removed.

For a complete listing of the 2009-10 Board of Directors, see page 2.

Perspective

Continued from page 1

schools or government, with which they have regular contact. Children have the highest trust in family because they are around family members every day. They also have a higher trust in schools because they attend school almost daily and are constantly interacting with teachers and principals. Their trust in government is not as high, in part because they don't have nearly as many interactions with governmental entities or officials.

Several years ago, the Association's Board of Directors approved the creation of a County Speaker's Bureau. Two years ago, the Association started a new educational Web site, www.welcometoyourcounty.org. We have posted many resources for teachers on this Web site to help them better educate their students. They can order copies of our award-winning video on county government, our award-winning county seals poster, or our booklet, *Welcome to Your County*.

As elected officials, we cannot rely solely on our public schools to educate our children about the services provided by counties. The amount of time spent

on civics education is minimal. And remember, the teachers are also covering state and federal governments during this time as well as the other branches of local government.

The media only seems to pay attention to local governments when there is a controversy or scandal to report.

We can sway these attitudes. One of our five strategic goals adopted by the Board of Directors in 2004 is to "educate the public and the media about the role of county government." I encourage all county commissioners across the state to seek out opportunities to speak to our youth, either at school functions or through organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Indian Guides or Indian Princess programs offered through your local YMCA or YWCA or other such youth organizations. If you would like to sign up for our County Speaker's Bureau, please contact the Association at (919) 715-2893 or ncacc@ncacc.org to be added to the roster. We will post this roster of speakers on our www.welcometoyourcounty.org Web site as another resource for teachers.

As Greek philosopher Diogenes once said, "The foundation of every state is the education of its youth."

Lottery pays off for counties trying to collect delinquent debts

By **Todd McGee**

Communications Director

Several winners of the North Carolina Education Lottery in September received a bit of a surprise when they got their checks from the state – some of the money was missing.

No, the state is not assessing a tax on lottery winnings in an effort to generate more revenues because of the economy. Instead, more than \$20,000 of lottery winnings for that month was diverted to cities and counties to settle past debts as part of the N.C. Local Government Debt Setoff program.

The program, authorized by the General Assembly and administered by the NCACC, the N.C. League of Municipalities and Five Star Computing in Columbia, S.C., offers another collection method for outstanding debts to counties, cities and other local agencies, such as water and sewer authorities, joint regional agencies, public health authorities and sanitary districts.

The entities submit their outstanding debts to the Debt Setoff Clearinghouse. These debts are sent to the N.C. Department of Revenue and compared with lists of anyone set to receive an income tax refund or lottery winnings. If a match is found, the DoR first pays off the debt before sending any money to the taxpayer.

Cherokee County was the big winner in the Sept. 22 report, receiving nearly \$6,000 of the almost \$80,000 that was returned to N.C. counties and cities.

The program can be used to collect any debt owed by a citizen – parking fines, property taxes, library fees, public health fees, etc. Before a debt can be submitted to the clearinghouse, the local government must send a letter notifying the taxpayer of the debt and giving them 30 days to pay the debt or the county will submit it to the clearinghouse and attempt to garnish the individual's state income tax refund to pay the debt. The letter also notifies the debtor that if the match is successful, he or she will be liable for a \$15 service fee.

Five Star President Bill Walsh said that this letter is a motivating factor for many taxpayers to settle their debt. He reported that Mitchell County collected nearly 40 percent of the debts from this letter even before sending the information to the clearinghouse.

According to statistics from Five Star, 88 counties are actively participating in the program for 2009. Five Star is actively recruiting the various entities that have been authorized by the General Assembly to participate, such as Public

A million reasons to participate

Since the Debt Setoff program's inception in 2002, 15 counties have collected at least \$1 million in unpaid debts, led by Gaston County, which has collected more than \$6.1 million.

1	Gaston	\$6.17 million
2	Cleveland	\$3.71 million
3	Forsyth	\$2.28 million
4	Wake	\$2.25 million
5	Durham	\$2.19 million
6	Wayne	\$2.16 million
7	Guilford	\$1.76 million
8	Robeson	\$1.69 million
9	Rowan	\$1.69 million
10	Vance	\$1.58 million
11	Rockingham	\$1.43 million
12	Lincoln	\$1.24 million
13	Randolph	\$1.14 million
14	Pitt	\$1.09 million
15	Iredell	\$1.00 million

Source: www.ncsetoff.org

Health Authorities and Sanitary Districts.

Because some of these agencies, as well as many smaller municipalities and counties, have smaller staffs, they have not signed up for the program. During a series of training sessions held throughout the state in September, Walsh said Five Star would work with smaller entities to help them understand the process and to create the files necessary so they could begin submitting debts.

Walsh said agencies with 50 or fewer debts could simply send the information to Five Star, and they would create the files needed to generate the letters to be sent to taxpayers and then submit the debts to the Department of Revenue. The entity would be responsible for printing and mailing the letters.

"We don't want anybody not participating because they say, 'I don't have the staff.' We will do your data entry. We will do your letters. And we won't charge you a thing," he said.

Walsh said that the offer is designed to help these agencies understand how simple it is to compile the data and begin submitting the debts.

For 2009, local governments have received more than \$21 million in unpaid taxes and fees. Since 2002, more than \$76 million has been returned.

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- 4: **F.D. Rivenbark**, Pender County
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 Phone: (919) 715-2893
 Fax: (919) 733-1065
 e-mail: ncacc@ncacc.org

www.ncacc.org

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Craven County's Deborah Hodges is the recipient of the NCACC's 2009 Frank Bonner Scholarship.

Craven's Hodges awarded Bonner Scholarship

Deborah C. Hodges, safety/risk management coordinator for Craven County, has been selected to receive the 2009 Frank Bonner Scholarship from the Association's Risk Management Pools.

Hodges will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the PRIMA Institute, the premier training program for public entity risk managers, to be held Oct. 26-29 in New Orleans.

Hodges is the runner-up for the award but will accept the scholarship in lieu of Jones County Clerk to the Board Jennifer Gray, who cannot attend.

"I feel that the Institute will give me a more in-depth look at risk management and help me expand the benefits of our current program," Hodges said.

The scholarship is named in honor of Bonner, a dedicated long-serving commissioner from Beaufort County who was instrumental in establishing the Pools, and is awarded annually to an individual demonstrating great initiative and dedication to implementing risk management techniques in the workplace.

Craven County is a member of the NCACC's Liability & Property Pool. Pool members govern and set the strategic direction for the pools through a Board of Trustees comprised of county commissioners and county management staff.

A true friend of the counties

Under Smith's leadership, LGFCU continues to strengthen its relationship with Association, counties

By Todd McGee
Communications Director

Maurice Smith, president of the Local Government Federal Credit Union, admits he was a little surprised when he found out he would be sitting at the head table during the President's Banquet at the NCACC Annual Conference in Catawba County.

Smith had been invited to attend the event by NCACC Executive Director David F. Thompson, ostensibly as a way to recognize the LGFCU's long-standing relationship with the NCACC and counties. Everybody else at the head table, including his wife, knew that Smith was about to be given the Association's Friend of the Counties Award.

"Initially, I thought, 'This is nice sitting at the head table and getting to see every one,'" Smith said. "But then I felt a little sheepish and wondered, 'Why am I up here?' I was astounded."

The award is further recognition of the strong relationship that exists between the NCACC and LGFCU, which have been linked at the hip since before the credit union even existed. In the 1970s, several banks sued the State Employees Credit Union over its decision to allow local government employees to become members.

The banks, upset that SECU was siphoning away potential customers, won their suit at the N.C. Supreme Court, arguing that SECU's charter did not allow it to include local government employees. But as the old saying goes, sometimes you have to be careful what you ask for.

Staff with the NCACC and the N.C. League of Municipalities were following the developments closely and had even filed briefs in support of the SECU during the court case. When the decision was handed down, NCACC and NCLM leaders began working with officials at SECU to launch a credit union designed for local government employees.

The LGFCU was launched in 1983. Today it boasts more than 175,000 members, many of whom would likely



LGFCU President Maurice Smith received the Association's Friend of the Counties Award on Aug. 29 during the NCACC's Annual Conference in Catawba County.

Photo by Todd McGee

be customers of commercial banks had some of their now-defunct predecessors not sued the SECU three decades ago.

"From the very beginning of the idea of having a local government credit union, the Association was right there on the front line the whole way," said Smith. "The affinity that our credit union has with the Association runs deep and long."

Smith joined the SECU as a loan officer trainee in 1979 – when the court case was meandering through the state's judicial system – after graduating from UNC-Wilmington with a degree in business administration. After a 13-year career with the SECU, he joined the LGFCU in 1992 as executive vice president.

He became LGFCU president in 1999 and has overseen a decade of rapid growth and expansion. He has also been the driving force behind the LGFCU's decision to become more involved with the NCACC and the NCLM. This year, he jumped at the chance to enlist the LGFCU as the sponsor for the Association's Employee Productivity Awards program. For the first 17 years the awards program had been sponsored by former Food Lion founder Ralph W. Ketner, who once worked for Rowan County Government.

"The Productivity Awards seems like one of the most exciting programs available to county employees," he said. "It seems like a program that rewards and encourages individuals to be their best ... and look for innovative ways to service the public. That's our kind of initiative. Our folks leaped for joy when we found out about it. It is our intention of never letting it go. We want to set the record for sponsoring these awards."

Besides donating \$10,000 each year to sponsor the awards program, the LGFCU supports the NCACC and the NCLM through a variety of endeavors. The LGFCU provides sponsorship funds for virtually all the NCACC conferences and meetings, makes available more than

Since 2005, the NCACC has recognized a non-county employee or organization annually for outstanding contributions to counties and county governments. The Friend of the Counties Award was created to encourage non-county persons and organizations to take significant actions that advance the interests of counties and the Association.

- 2005: N.C. Reps. Becky Carney (Mecklenburg) and Carolyn Justice (Pender)
- 2006: N.C. Reps. Bill Owens (Pasquotank) and Wilma Sherrill (Buncombe)
- 2007: All members of the General Assembly
- 2008: Ralph W. Ketner
- 2009: Maurice Smith

\$60,000 per year in scholarship funds for local government employees to attend training sessions at the School of Government, and recently started LGFCU Financial Partners, which makes commercial loans to local governments, principally to purchase equipment and other infrastructure needs for fire departments.

In addition, the LGFCU built a state-of-the-art conference center in the Quorum Center and allows both the NCACC and NCLM to use the facility free-of-charge throughout the year. Besides being home to the LGFCU and the NCACC's Risk Management Pools, the Quorum Center now houses the N.C. Sheriff's Association and several other local government associations. Smith has surrounded himself with his members, and he wouldn't have it any other way.

"I can't think of anything else I'd rather do," Smith said. "We have a good mission. We have a talented staff. We have a dedicated Board of Directors. And I think we serve the best constituency in North Carolina – the public service employees, particularly at the local government level. We find our members to be very civic-minded, very community-oriented and to have a strong concern for building a better community. Those sort of principles line up very well with what we do as a credit union."

Three named to LGFCU councils

Three county employees were named to LGFCU advisory councils in September. Appointments included: Craven County Human Resources Technician Candice Conner (Central Coast), Warren County Human Resources Manager Elgin Lane (North Triangle) and Wake County Benefits Specialist Phyllis Jackson (Wake).

Advisory council members represent the philosophical character of the credit union and contribute their time without compensation, function as LGFCU's eyes and ears throughout the state, serving as liaisons between credit union members and non-members and LGFCU management. There are 22 councils statewide.

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New ethics law to impact commissioners, boards

The Association and the School of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill are working on several fronts to provide ethics training for elected county officials and a model code of ethics for county boards to help meet new legal requirements.

The North Carolina General Assembly passed Session Law 2009-403 (House Bill 1452), enacting a new Part 3A of Article 5 of Chapter 160A, which requires governing boards of cities, counties, local boards of education, unified governments, sanitary districts, and consolidated city-counties to adopt a resolution or policy containing a code of ethics by Jan. 1, 2011. In addition, members of these boards must also receive two hours of ethics training by Jan. 1, 2011. Subsequent training is required of elected officials after each election.

The law states the required training may be provided by the NCACC, the N.C. League of Municipalities, the N.C. School Boards Association, the School of Government, or other qualified sources at the choice of the governing board.

LOCAL ELECTED LEADERS

Academy

Through LELA, the NCACC and School of Government have established for individual county commissioners a three-level recognition program, which will help the Association achieve one of its strategic goals, "strengthen county leadership and board development." County commissioners began earning credits toward achieving official recognition for their commitment to lifelong learning in December 2008 with the kickoff of the Essentials of County Government program.

Commissioners can reach the "Practitioner" level with 50 credits, the "Master" level with 66 credits, and the "Mentor" level with 82 credits.

The next training opportunity will come during the one-day Regional Lead-

erShop on Local Finance, "Making Sense of Annual Financial Statements," which will be offered at six locations across the state beginning Dec. 2. Registration opens Oct. 19. For a listing of dates and locations, see the Calendar of Events on page 8.

In addition to the session on ethics, the interactive workshop will provide an explanation of the basics of local government finance, with an emphasis on how decisions made today will affect the future. Elected officials who attend the Regional LeaderShop on Local Finance will earn six credits toward recognition for their commitment to lifelong learning through the Local Elected Leaders Academy.

For more information on the Regional LeaderShop, visit www.sog.unc.edu/courses/1641. The registration fee for the LeaderShop is \$175, which includes the two-hour session on ethics. You must register for the LeaderShop in order to sign up for the ethics training. For more information on the LELA recognition program, visit www.ncacc.org/lela.html.

Additional ethics workshops will be offered across the state beginning in March 2010. A schedule will be published in the December issue of *CountyLines*, on the NCACC and School of Government Web sites, and on listservs.

A webinar will be developed for those unable to attend other training opportunities. This will be available by spring 2010. Note that elected officials using this option must have their respective governing boards determine that the webinar is a "qualified source" under G.S. 160A-84(c).

The School of Government is also creating a template to guide units of local governments in developing and adopting codes of ethics. Information will be available early in 2010. Please note that the requirement for boards of commissioners to have a resolution or policy on ethics is not effective until Jan. 1, 2011, so boards have more than a full year to learn about, deliberate and adopt a code that works for them. Contact Fleming Bell at the School of Government at bell@sog.unc.edu if you have questions.

Keep a careful eye on county certificates of insurance

By Michael Kelly

Property & Casualty Program Specialist

Simply stated, a certificate of insurance is a document issued by an insurance company or its agent that provides a very brief description of an entity's insurance coverage. It normally is requested from an entity or company that is providing some type of product or performing some type of service for your county.

The information provided should include at a minimum the policy coverage limits, inception and expiration dates, as well as the specific insurance company name for each line of insurance listed. It will state the certificate holder's name and address, the agent for the insurance company, as well as who is the actual insured party.

The certificate verifies at the time it was issued that a certain insurance policy has in fact been issued and is in effect for that point in time. To ensure its validity, the certificate should be signed by an officer of the insurance company or its agent.

While there are many proprietary certificate of insurance forms in the marketplace, the generally considered

standard is the "Acord Certificate of Insurance Form #25." It is widely used by "for-profit" insurance carriers and their agents. Using a standard form decreases the likelihood of an error or misinterpretation of coverage.

A certificate of insurance is not a complete explanation or description of all the coverage listed. The certificate will in fact often state that the insurance afforded by the policies described is subject to all the terms, exclusions and conditions of such policies. The certificate form often will stipulate any aggregate liability limits shown may have been reduced by paid claims earlier in the policy term to other claimants. On the Acord form, there are two blocks that can be checked that clarify how any liability aggregates are to be applied, being either by project or by location. For county construction projects this is an important point to consider.

Pay close attention to any special provisions, description of operations, or limiting coverage language that is added by the insurance company or its agent. Note any disclaimer, additional insured or subrogation waiver specifics and verify that these are in concert with

county expectations.

This is where a certificate holder can often get into trouble without their knowledge. Any exclusions or limiting provisions found within the policies will apply and dictate the availability of coverage. The certificate of insurance is not intended to constitute a contract and does not transfer risk or amend any insurance policy language. It instead states in greatly abbreviated terms the basic policy coverage, limits and effective dates.

So how does a county manager, risk manager or finance officer know in fact their interests are being protected and they are getting accurate information? The short answer is, when possible deal with experienced professionals that you know, and ask questions if something does not make sense.

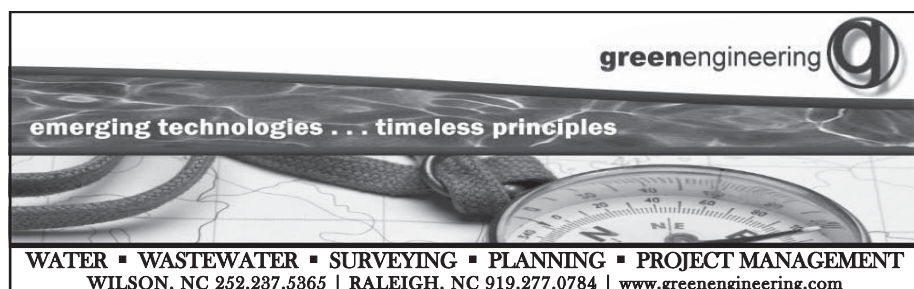
From a coverage standpoint, an insurance company will not intentionally be obscure or unclear in chosen language on their certificates; it is in their best interest to be as transparent as possible. When in question, do what you can to verify – even to the point of requesting actual policy endorsements – and take the time to carefully read each certificate of insurance. You will catch 95 percent

of the traditionally made errors.

Misspellings, typographical mistakes and other similar errors never matter until something potentially catastrophic happens – then it likely will matter. If possible, appoint an individual to be responsible for reviewing any and all received certificates of insurance so that over time that individual will become experienced with all the possible variations in the certificate of insurance forms and know the usual vendors utilized by your county. With a little help, this can be performed by an individual with limited or no risk management experience. Emphasizing the importance of this review function to the individual will go a long way to keeping your county out of trouble.

Remember, "for-profit" insurance companies are in the business to make money. If it is potentially more cost-effective to litigate the question of available coverage than it is to step up and pay, some will opt for the least expensive route with little or no hesitation.

Like it or not, the devil is in the details, but with careful diligence and common sense, ensuring the accuracy of your certificates of insurance does not have to be like navigating a mine field.



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Cabarrus

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and its elected leaders have a responsibility to lead by example.

“I cannot expect a citizen to do something that I’m not willing to do myself,” he said. “If we are asking the people in the county to work toward being sustainable we need to lead by setting the example.”

The change in mindset of county employees is something that hasn’t happened overnight, but the county keeps hammering home the point.

“You want every employee to think, ‘What can I do to be more sustainable?’” said Kevin Grant, the county’s sustainability manager. “It took so many years to create the culture of what you’re doing. We’re slowly seeing a turnaround.”

In some instances, reminders are literally staring employees in the face: light switch plates in county facilities have a sticker with a reminder to employees to turn off the lights when they leave the room, and employees are reminded to shut down their computers and switch off their monitors at the end of each workday. Other initiatives, such as green purchasing practices, have taken a little longer to take off.

A combination of national and local circumstances contributed to the broad yet integrated scope of sustainability initiatives, said County Manager John Day.

“The staff and I recognized the importance of making sustainability a part of the way we do business for a number

of reasons,” he said. “There was such a convergence of things at one time – the problems of our economy, issues with the food system – it made the need to change the way we do things apparent to everybody, including the board.”

The root of the problem

“What we’re doing is really all very integrated, so one of our concerns is the rate and nature of development that we have experienced,” Day said. “There are a lot of wasted resources that go into the type of development that we have experienced.”

Bordering Mecklenburg County to the northeast, Cabarrus experienced rapid growth and development in a short period of time. The sprawl quickly outpaced infrastructure and gobbled up what was rural land. New infrastructure had to be built – at the expense of maintaining and replacing existing infrastructure.

The growth prompted the county to enter into a 15-year interlocal agreement with the City of Concord to establish growth boundaries and funnel development into areas where infrastructure already existed. Zoning and the growth boundaries prohibit utility expansion into certain areas of the county – but Day said the county still has an obligation to ensure that people who live there can use their land productively.

With a strong agricultural heritage and a large local commodity in beef cattle, the county forged ahead to try to pave the way for food to be raised, processed and consumed locally.

Appetite grows for local food, healthy lifestyle

Day points out that there’s a considerable amount of public health funds that support people with preventable diseases and health problems caused by poor eating habits. Growing the local food base and widening the net of sellers of locally grown foods and restaurants that serve local products will result in more people eating fresher, healthier foods. There’s also an economic development aspect of building a robust local food system, of course, and keeping more money spent on food in the local economy can be a major economic driver.

The county has seven farmer’s markets, providing a good outlet for local food sales. But building a demand for local food won’t work without maintaining and growing the supply of local foods and providing fertile ground for new farmers to flourish. That’s where the Elma Lomax Incubator Farm comes into play.

In partnership with N.C. Cooperative Extension, the county provides classroom-style and hands-on education at the 30-acre farm. In its first year of operation, nine new farmers learned the science and economics of farming. Each participant receives roughly a third of an acre to grow his or her produce.

The county also obtained a \$675,000 grant from the N.C. Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to help build a beef slaughter facility adjacent to a family-owned processing plant. The facility is currently in the design stages. Once completed, beef cattle born in the county will never have to leave – it’s a true homegrown, farm-to-fork operation. It’s all part of creating a more resilient local economy, according to White and Day.

“If we all keep it here in Cabarrus County, it’s able to help our farmers, it protects our farmland and our heritage, and provides product to local consumers,” White said.

Day, who has been appointed to the N.C. Sustainable Food Advisory Council, said the Board of Commissioners plans to create and appoint members to its own Local Food Policy Council. That council will oversee a community food assessment that will help county leaders identify the types of foods individual and institutional consumers are demanding, and how the county can help connect buyers with local sellers, among other things.

Healthy eating habits are but a part of the lifestyle changes county leaders are hoping to see result from the initiatives.

Commissioner Bob Carruth said he is particularly proud of the county’s development of jogging and walking trails and decision to promote walkable, livable communities. And the county didn’t miss an opportunity to educate the public about wildlife and plants at the parks by installing educational signs along pathways, according to General Services Director Kyle Bilafer.

Conserving at a new level

The county’s purchasing policy encourages employees to buy products that are made of recycled material, but county employees have taken it to the next level. The General Services Department has set

up an online “swap and shop” program that allows one department to see if another department already has supplies that would normally be ordered from a vendor. That reduces the number of trips the vendor has to make to deliver supplies to county government offices, and allows for larger orders and less packaging. The end result is less waste and a smaller carbon footprint for the county.

The carpeting that the county installs in its facilities is cradle-to-cradle, in that it is made from recycled materials. Once it has outlived its lifespan, it will simply be recycled and reused to make new carpet.

Bilafer said the county has installed automated HVAC systems at eight county facilities that are programmed to shut off at down times to conserve energy.

A new facility that will house five county agencies will be a LEED certified building, and according to White, the architect is a county native, and the construction manager’s workforce consists of 90 percent to 95 percent county citizens.

“This is what gives my work as a board member validation,” he said. “It’s going to be designed and built by people here in Cabarrus County. That’s something that I’m very proud of.”

The county currently owns 33 hybrids – 26 Toyota Camrys, five Ford Escapes and two Mercury Mariners – in its fleet. The bulk of the vehicles are used by Social Services personnel; they replace the gas-guzzling Ford Crown Victorias that are handed down from the Sheriff’s Office. The county also trains its employees on proper driving techniques and how to optimize fuel economy in a hybrid. Grant said that for 2008-09 the county realized a fuel savings of roughly 10,000 gallons of fuel – equating to 96 tons of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere – by incorporating hybrids into its fleet.

Leading by example

The county is promoting its sustainability practices on its Web site (www.cabarruscounty.us), through monthly discussions at libraries, and via other events such as the annual county fair.

Commissioners have taken sustainability to heart as well, implementing their own practices and changing their habits at home.

“For the first time in many years I dug up a little patch of land in my backyard, no more than 2 feet wide by 8 feet long, and plopped down three tomato plants,” Carruth said. “We’ve had a bumper crop of tomatoes. I always thought I didn’t have time to do it. Next year I want to expand it a little more.”

White said his family’s eating habits have helped to teach his children about where food comes from.

“I’ve joined a local CSA – which is supporting farmers and buying vegetables from them locally,” he said. “The meats my family eats now are raised and processed in Cabarrus County. And if it’s not within Cabarrus County it’s within North Carolina.

“When I grew up, going to the farmer’s market was an every-Saturday event. We’ve gotten away from that. It’s good that my children are looking that person in the eye and knowing who has grown that vegetable and where it came from.”



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PRUDENTIAL RETIREMENT

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Nine new district directors join Board

Representatives from the NCACC's odd-numbered districts caucused at the 102nd Annual Conference to select district directors to two-year terms on the NCACC Board of Directors. Six of those directors are featured here. New District 1 Director Phil Faison (Camden County), District 9 Director Amy Dalrymple (Lee) and District 13 Director Barbara Beatty (Catawba) will be featured in November.

Directors are expected to maintain contact with other commissioners in their districts. This allows directors to know and to understand the issues that affect the counties in their district and provides a means for communicating with our members. District directors should inform Association staff and other members of the Board of Directors about matters of interest or concern in their districts.

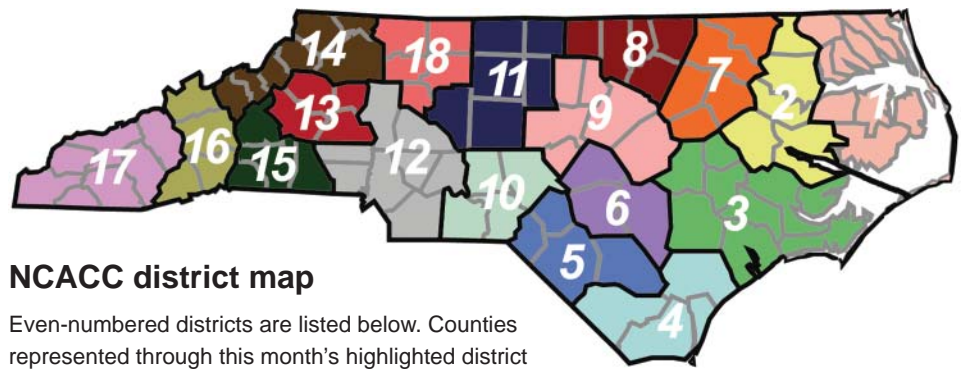
Advocacy: As part of the Association's grassroots advocacy program, district directors serve as a primary contact when we need legislative action. At times, they may be asked to find out what

other commissioners in their districts think about specific legislative proposals.

Representation: District directors are encouraged to foster constructive intergovernmental relationships in their counties. This includes participating in civic education programs in schools and community organizations, or at colleges and universities in the area. District directors may also represent the NCACC with other interested parties or organizations at the local level.

Mentoring: District directors help mentor newly elected commissioners from their districts, especially in the year following county elections, by offering encouragement, helping them to understand county government, and sharing experiences. Most importantly, district directors should encourage new commissioners to become involved in NCACC programs, activities and committees.

For a full listing of district directors and members of the Board of Directors, see page 2.



NCACC district map

Even-numbered districts are listed below. Counties represented through this month's highlighted district directors are listed in those directors' profiles.

- District 1:** Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell and Washington
- District 2:** Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin and Pitt
- District 4:** Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover and Pender
- District 6:** Cumberland, Harnett and Sampson
- District 8:** Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren
- District 9:** Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Orange and Wake

- District 10:** Anson, Montgomery, Moore and Richmond
- District 12:** Cabarrus, Gaston, Iredell, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Rowan, Stanly and Union
- District 14:** Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey
- District 15:** Cleveland, McDowell, Polk and Rutherford
- District 16:** Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania
- District 18:** Davie, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry and Yadkin



CHRISTINE MELE

District 3 Director
Pamlico County

Represents Carteret, Craven, Duplin, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pamlico and Wayne counties

Occupation: Retired educator, owner of a commercial cell tower business, musician

Top local priority: "Be able to keep quality county services functioning as we face reduced revenues from every source."

Why did you run for office? "With a background in the public sector and as an entrepreneur, basic principles on the role of government have guided my decisions in office. Those principles have been well understood by my constituents who have continued to support me in office and were the reason I was initially approached to fill a vacancy on the board in 1997. I am passionate about being a voice for those who are alarmed about greater and greater growth of government and its impact on our lives."



ROBERT WRIGHT

District 5 Director
Hoke County

Represents Bladen, Hoke, Robeson and Scotland counties

Occupation: Farmer – corn, soybeans, rye, oats, wheat, etc. on "a couple thousand acres."

Political history: 10th year on Board of Commissioners. Previously served 10 years on school board.

Top local priority: "Bringing retail sales to Hoke County."

Why did you run for office? "I thought I could help Hoke County to be a better place to live, and with my knowledge of farming, how to get the most out of a dollar."

Born: March 27, 1941

Education: Campbell College (now Campbell University), graduated in 1963 in the first four-year class

Family: Married to Shirley for 46 years; three sons; two grandchildren with a third due Oct. 22

What are you most proud of from work in public service? "When I was chairman we brought an ethanol plant to Hoke County and it will open this January. That's rather unique to have an ethanol plant."



ROBERT CARTER

District 7 Director
Northampton County

Represents Edgecombe, Halifax, Nash, Northampton and Wilson counties

Occupation: Retired educator

Political history: First elected in 1998. Currently serving third term.

Top local priority: "A new DSS building. We're in the planning stages now."

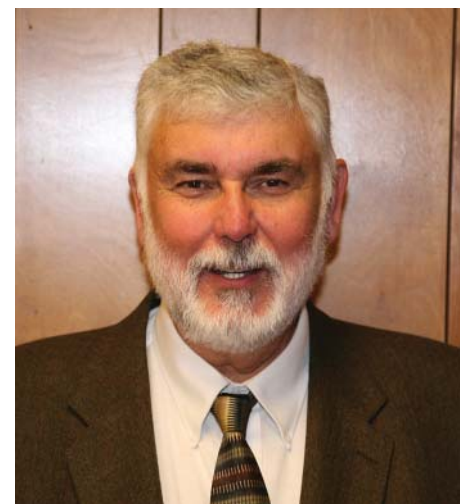
Why did you run for office? "I ran to increase the involvement of citizens with the board. I wanted to see a majority represented in the county's affairs."

Born: Oct. 3, 1940

Education: B.S. in Biology, Shaw University, 1965

Family: Wife, Ida; seven children; 10 grandchildren

What are you most proud of from work in public service? "The uniting of the citizens in our county. I think that since my involvement on the board more people have become active in what's going on in county government. I think that when people are active and informed, they feel good about their government."



DANA JONES

District 17 Director
Cherokee County

Represents Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain counties

Occupation: Real estate appraiser with offices in Sylva, Franklin and Cherokee County

Political history: In his third four-year term on the Board of Commissioners. He is the first person to be elected to a third term in Cherokee County.

Top local priority: "My top priority for our local area is economic development, to be ready for recruitment when the economy shifts. To do this we have to develop infrastructure and other local resources when money is available."

Why did you run for office? "To provide much needed leadership in Cherokee County going forward into the 21st century."

Born: Dec. 31, 1947

Education: Graduated from Knoxville Business College

Family: Wife, Laurie, six children and two grandchildren

What are you most proud of from work in public service? "I keep an open line of communication with my constituents."

RENÉE McDERMOTT

District 15 Director
Polk County

Represents Cleveland, McDowell,
Polk and Rutherford counties

Occupation: Retired attorney
(served as Brown County, Ind., attorney
from 1994-98); former educator

Political history: Elected in 2008 to
first four-year term on Board of Commis-
sioners

Top local priority: “To keep Polk
County rural and beautiful.”

Why did you run for office? “There
weren’t enough efforts being made to
keep the county that way and I thought
that I could help out.”

Birthday: Sept. 26

Education: Bachelor’s in English
and Journalism, University of South
Florida; Master’s in Math and Science
Education, USF; J.D. from Indiana Uni-
versity in Bloomington

Family: Married to Jim McDermott



for 23 years

**What are you most proud of
from work in public service?** “Pass-
ing a mountain and ridgeline protection
ordinance.”

**Interesting story from tenure on
Board of Commissioners:** “The reces-
sion is sort of an interesting story, and
trying to do all the things that people
want and need without raising taxes.”

DARRELL FRYE

District 11 Director
Randolph County

Represents Alamance, Caswell,
Davidson, Guilford, Randolph and
Rockingham counties

Occupation: Vice President of
Finance and Administration, Harriss &
Covington Hosiery Mills

Political history: First elected in
1982. Currently serving seventh term.
Past NCACC President (1990-91); Out-
standing County Commissioner Award
winner (1992).

Top local priority: “Other than bal-
ancing the budget, jobs and investment for
our county, and our educational needs.”

Why did you run for office? “I
continue to have an interest in local gov-
ernment. I think the government closest
to the people governs the best, and I just
like to contribute when I can.”

Born: Aug. 14, 1945

Family: Wife, Renee; four children;
10 grandchildren



**What are you most proud of from
work in public service?** “I’m most
proud of the continued commitment that
we’ve made to education and meeting the
educational needs of our county. I think
since I’ve been on the board we’ve built
14 new schools. That takes a lot of work
and cooperation. ... I’ve been glad that
we’ve had a good working relationship
with our school board that has allowed us
to effectively meet our needs.”

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT
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Local officials work toward GASB 45 compliance

Nearly one in five local governments that provide healthcare benefits to retirees are not aware of new accounting guidelines going into effect this year that impact how local governments must report these liabilities.

According to a survey released in late September by Cobalt Community Research, 20 percent of local governments nationwide are not aware of the new requirements contained in "Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 45," which was released in August 2004.

GASB 45, "Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other than Pensions," sets standards on how state and local governments should account for and report their costs and obligations related to post employment healthcare and other non-pension benefits. Collectively, these benefits are commonly referred to as other post employment benefits, or OPEB for short.

The statement generally requires that state and local governmental employers account for and report the annual cost of OPEB and the outstanding obligations and commitments related to OPEB in essentially the same manner as they currently do for pensions. Annual OPEB cost for most employers will be based on actuarially determined amounts that, if paid on an ongoing basis, generally would provide sufficient resources to pay benefits as they come due.

The provisions of Statement 45 may be applied prospectively and do not require governments to fund their OPEB plans. An employer may establish its OPEB liability at zero as of the beginning of the initial year of implementation; however, the unfunded actuarial liability is required to be amortized over future periods.

Statement 45 also establishes disclosure requirements for information about the plans in which an employer participates, for the funding policy followed, for the actuarial valuation process and assumptions, and, for certain employers, the extent to which the plan has been funded over time.

Statement 45 is effective in three phases based on a government's total annual revenues. The largest employers were required to implement the requirements of Statement 45 for periods beginning after Dec. 15, 2006. Medium-sized employers have one additional year to implement the standards, and the smallest employers have two additional years. Earlier implementation is encouraged.

"The Health and OPEB Funding Strategies: 2009 National Survey of Local Governments" report is based on

Please see GASB 45 on page 9

Career Opportunities

LOCAL HEALTH DIRECTOR – The Greene County Board of Health is seeking qualified applicants for the vacant Health Director position. The successful candidate will manage a variety of programs in this largely rural county with a population of over 20,000. Applicants must meet the following qualifications established by the NC Legislature and the State Personnel Commission. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities: General knowledge of management principles, techniques, and practices. Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of public health. Working knowledge of applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. Ability to exercise sound judgment in analyzing situations and making decisions. Develop and maintain effective working relationships with the general public; and with federal, state, and local officials. Minimum Education and Experience Requirements: a master's degree in public health administration and at least one year of employment experience in health services; or a master's degree in a public health discipline other than public health administration and at least three years of employment experience in health services; or a master's degree in public administration and at least two years experience in health services; or a master's degree in a field related to public health and at least three years of experience in health services; or a bachelor's degree in public health administration or public administration and at least three years experience in health services. Considerable skill and experience in the supervision of administrative, supervisory and professional public health staff is required. The successful candidate will be required to relocate and reside within Greene County. The salary range is \$49,796 – \$69,550. Actual salary will depend upon experience and education. Interested candidate must complete and submit a NC State Application Form PD-107, cover letter, résumé and transcripts to: Dr. Ivey Smith, Chairman, Greene County Board of Health, Health Director Vacancy, 227 Kingold Blvd., Suite B, Snow Hill, NC 28580. Closing date: November 1, 2009. EOE/ADA.

TAX ADMINISTRATOR – Vance County a small, rural county located in the north central Piedmont of North Carolina, is seeking a self-motivated individual to fill the position of Tax Administrator. The offices and positions of the Tax Assessor and the Tax Collector are combined into one position. The Tax Administrator is responsible for listing, appraising, assessing all real and personal, maintenance of all property maps, property ownership changes, the collection of all current and delinquent taxes, Hotel/Motel Occupancy taxes, privilege license fees, as well as Beer and Wine licenses. Graduation from a four year college or university with a major business, economics, public administration, or related field preferred, and considerable experience in property appraisal, real estate, or related field including some supervisory experience. Salary: Negotiable DOQ. Application Deadline: Open until filled. Submit a Vance County application (available at www.vance-county.org) to Vance County Human Resources as directed on application. Vance County is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

FIRE MARSHAL/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR – Bladen County is seeking an individual to perform administrative and supervisory work in planning, organizing, and directing the County emergency services. Work involves developing plans on responder responsibilities; coordinating multi-agency responses; conducting and planning meetings and field exercises; writing grants; coordinating work as liaison between County, State and Federal government officials with local fire departments; assisting fire departments in developing and implementing training programs; preparing annual budgets for submission to the County Manager and Board of Commissioners; ensuring all fire reports are maintained as required; and managing EOC operations during events. Employee must exercise considerable tact and courtesy in dealing with officials at the local and State level and in meeting with the general public. Employee is subject to the usual hazards of emergency response work. Reports to the County Manager. Bachelor's degree with five to six years of experience in fire service and/or emergency management, including administrative and supervisory responsibilities is preferred. Equivalent combination of experience and training which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the job may be considered. Must possess Standard or Probationary Level III Fire Code Inspection Certification. Applicant must be able to obtain Type I State Certification in Emergency Management within three years. Applicant must possess a valid N.C. driver's license. Salary: \$45,939 – \$58,188. Closing Date: Oct. 23. Applications may be obtained at the Employment Security Commission office located at 401 Mercer Mill Road, Elizabethtown, NC 28337 or downloaded @ www.bladeninfor.org. An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

COUNTY ATTORNEY – Cumberland County, a large and growing county in southeastern North Carolina, enjoys a diverse population of more than 300,000. Fayetteville, whose motto is "History, Heroes and a Hometown Feeling," is the county seat and one of nine municipalities within the county. Fayetteville offers a revitalized downtown area and numerous shopping opportunities. Smaller municipalities within the county provide the options of small-town life in more rural settings. One of the county's greatest assets is its thriving arts and cultural community. Theatre, symphony orchestras, museums for adults and children are available. A variety of festivals and special events are held throughout the year. Cumberland County is home to two outstanding universities and an excellent community college. The county has an award-winning library system. The County Attorney will serve as chief legal counsel to the County Commissioners, County Manager, County Departments and boards regarding policies, procedures, regulatory and compliance requirements; represent the county in complex litigation and supervise the county legal department, including two staff attorneys. We offer a competitive salary and benefit package. Visit www.co.cumberland.nc.us for a full description of duties, requirements and application procedures.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DIRECTOR – Bladen County is seeking an individual to perform administrative and supervisory work in the coordination of EMS emergency and non-emergency transport activities of the department. Work involves responsibility for various managerial areas to include operations, training, budgeting and billing, coordinating services with other agencies, participating in community projects and regional and state organizations to benefit and improve the department. Reports to the County Manager. Bachelor's degree with five to six years of experience in Emergency Medical Services is preferred, to include administrative and supervisory responsibilities. Equivalent combination of education, training and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the job may be considered. Applicant should be a North Carolina State Certified Paramedic; and possess ACLS, ITLS AND PALS certification. Applicant must possess a valid North Carolina driver's license. Salary: \$45,939 – \$58,188. Closing date: October 23, 2009. Applications may be obtained at the Employment Security Commission office located at 401 Mercer Mill Road Elizabethtown, NC 28337 or downloaded @ www.bladeninfor.org. Bladen County is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES AND HOMELAND SECURITY – Onslow County is seeking a Director for a mature and progressive, consolidated Emergency Services and Homeland Security Department consisting of four divisions: Emergency Management and Homeland Security, Emergency Medical Services, E-911 Communications and the Office of the Fire Marshal. As Director of Emergency Services and Homeland Security, this employee will be responsible to plan, implement and manage emergency and security operations for the County. This is an opportunity to work with the best; a model system for the state of North Carolina that is recognized nationally as a best practice in Emergency Management and noteworthy collaboration with Department of Defense activities. Work is performed under the general supervision of the County Manager. Minimum Education and Experience Requirements include Bachelor's Degree in Emergency Management, Public Safety or related field with eight (8) years work experience of a wide and progressively responsible nature in the emergency management occupation field including (3) years of management experience; or an equivalent of education and experience. Salary and benefits package commensurate with qualifications and experience. Employment applications may be found at www.onslowcountync.gov (employment drop down). Application form, résumé with three professional references, and cover letter identifying the applicant's strengths and salary history must be mailed or faxed to Onslow County Human Resources, 202 Old Bridge Street, Jacksonville, NC 28540 (Fax: 910-347-2793). Position will remain open until filled. EOE.

Calendar of Events

For a complete listing of events, visit www.ncacc.org/meetings.htm.

- ▼ **NOVEMBER**
 - 5 NCACC Environment Steering Committee meeting, Albert Coates Local Government Center, Raleigh (Wake County)
- ▼ **DECEMBER**
 - 2 Regional LeaderShop: "Local Finance: Making Sense of It All" (LELA Credit), Sheraton Chapel Hill (Orange County)
 - 9-10 NCACC Risk Management Pools Board of Trustees meeting, Quorum Center, Raleigh (Wake County)
- ▼ **JANUARY 2010**
 - 13 Regional LeaderShop: "Local Finance: Making Sense of It All" (LELA Credit), Hilton Wilmington Riverside (New Hanover County)
 - 29 Regional LeaderShop: "Local Finance: Making Sense of It All" (LELA Credit), Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord (Cabarrus County)
 - 17 Regional LeaderShop: "Local Finance: Making Sense of It All" (LELA Credit), Hilton Greenville (Pitt County)
 - 24 Regional LeaderShop: "Local Finance: Making Sense of It All" (LELA Credit), Doubletree Hotel Biltmore/Asheville (Buncombe County)



ADVERTISING POLICY

The NCACC publishes career opportunities in CountyLines and on its Web site at www.ncacc.org/classifieds.htm.

CountyLines rates (monthly)
\$1.50 per printed line (minimum of \$25 per monthly ad) for North Carolina member counties and county entities; \$3.50 per printed line (minimum \$75) for all others.

Web site rates (one-time charge)
\$20 per ad (up to 400 words) for N.C. counties and county entities; \$50 per ad for all others. After 400 words, all ads will cost an additional \$5 per every 50 words.

General information and instructions
Ads published in CountyLines are posted online at no additional charge and will remain posted on the Web for up to six months. Ads may be submitted, along with billing information, to Jason King via e-mail (communications@ncacc.org), or faxed to (919) 733-1065. Non-N.C. member counties must provide a credit card number before ads will be posted. **The deadline for advertising in the next issue of CountyLines is Wednesday, Nov. 4.** For more information, please call Jason King at (919) 715-0045.

Z10 the benchmark for safety standards

By Bob Carruth
Risk Control Specialist

It is not uncommon for a county government to struggle with its safety program. Often, these programs are borrowed or brought in from the outside, are usually related to industrial or construction safety, and are not geared for the multifunctional environment that is the county government. Many times, these safety programs begin to take on the feel of the "flavor of the month" club.

County governments are not the only ones facing this issue. Many organizations struggle with how to design and implement a safety program and then how to judge the effectiveness of their program.

This confusion has been exacerbated by the rise in the number of international standards and accreditation bodies. In 1999 the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved the Z10 committee, with the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) as its secretariat. This committee, comprised of representatives from government, industry and organized labor, as well as technical experts in the field of occupational safety and health, began the task of drafting a consensus-based standard for what an organizational health and safety management system should look like. As a result of the committee's work, ANSI Z10 was published and approved by the committee on July 25, 2005.

Using best practices from across the

full spectrum of the organizations represented, the standard provides a common platform and benchmark to evaluate the organizational structure and best practices for the implementation and maintenance of a safety management system. Although adoption is totally voluntary, it is still used as a reference for determining strengths and weaknesses in an organization's health and safety program.

The concept of the standard is to promote continual improvement of the health and safety program, which should result in a reduction in the number of incidents and increased employee productivity and morale as the process continues to work.

The sections in the standard are laid out to match the basic steps of a continual improvement process. Although it would be reasonable to expect the standard to include a detailed checklist on what has to be done to address hazards and control incidents, the standard does not offer this level of detail. Instead, the standard focuses on the process of managing health and safety and what needs to be addressed to accomplish this. The five major components of the health and safety management system include:

1. **Management Leadership and Employee Participation:** Provides guidelines on what it means to lead the health and safety program at the senior management level, as well as how employees are included in the management process.

2. **Planning:** Details how to conduct initial and follow-up assessments of risk

exposures, how to develop objectives for the health and safety process, and how to allocate resources to implement the plan.

3. **Implementation and Operation:** Provides the framework for the major portions of a health and safety management system. This includes the operational elements, education and training, communication of the program, and program documentation and records maintenance.

4. **Evaluation and Corrective Action:** How to monitor the safety plan utilizing metrics, assessment and audits to ensure compliance with the system by subordinate elements. Included in this would be the investigation of incidents to determine corrections needed in the program.

5. **Management Review:** Periodic review of senior management to determine if the objectives developed in the original plan have been effective in achieving the desired outcomes. This is a formal process and sets the stage for corrections or changes in the overall health and safety management system to drive further improvement.

ANSI Z10 can be a successful tool for members of the NCACC Risk Management Pools who are looking to assess the effectiveness of their safety programs. We will provide additional articles explaining each of the components in detail over the next several months. November's topic will be the key components needed for senior management to lead the health and safety process and how to get employees more involved.

GASB 45

Continued from page 8

responses from more than 1,500 city, county, township and special district governments across the county randomly polled this year.

According to the Cobalt study, approximately 78 percent of the survey respondents provide healthcare to their employees, with 30 percent also providing healthcare to retirees.

Much of the report focused on local government awareness and response to GASB 45. This statement creates a national standard for the measurement and disclosure of state and local government OPEB liabilities, especially in the area of healthcare for retirees. All state and local governments are expected to disclose information about their OPEB costs and liabilities in their annual financial reports for fiscal years beginning in 2009.

For governments that calculated their OPEB liability, 40 percent plan to fully or partially prefund the liability. Roughly 52 percent plan to continue a pay-as-you-go approach.


To help counties comply with these rules, the Association negotiated for the services of Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting, an actuarial consulting firm based in the Atlanta suburbs. This firm has agreed to conduct the necessary actuarial and valuation work necessary to comply with the new GASB rules at costs that are significantly lower than if a county contracted with a firm individually. Pricing is based on the number of employees and whether the county participates in the County Health Plan.

The Association and the N.C. League of Municipalities negotiated the discounted rates with Cavanaugh Macdonald after completing a careful selection process and receiving proposals from a number of firms. Cavanaugh Macdonald is a well-qualified firm whose staff has significant experience working with North Carolina local governments.

The study was conducted by Cobalt Community Research (www.cobalt-communityresearch.org), a leading nonprofit research organization based in Lansing, Mich. The study was funded by a coalition of organizations: Gabriel Roeder Smith & Company, the Government Finance Officers Association, the Employee Benefit Research Institute, the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans, the Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Michigan, the National Conference on Public Employee Retirement Systems, and Tegrit Financial Group.

The report is available for purchase at www.cobaltcommunityresearch.org/health.

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Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) partners with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to provide counties and their employees with a competitive deferred compensation program. As part of this partnership, Nationwide pays a fee to NACo in exchange for NACo's exclusive endorsement, marketing support, and program oversight of Nationwide products made available under the program. For more information, including fees paid, Nationwide encourages you to visit nrsforu.com.

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1.877.677.3678
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Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting, LLC

For assistance, contact:

- Todd Green: (678) 388-1705 or toddg@cavmacconsulting.com; or
- Ed Macdonald: (678) 388-1701 or edm@cavmacconsulting.com

Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting is located at 665 Molly Lane, Suite 150, in Woodstock, Ga.

Lee County voters to consider quarter-cent sales tax

Lee County commissioners will use proceeds from a quarter-cent sales tax to pay for renovations to Lee County High School if voters approve the measure Nov. 3. The tax is estimated to generate \$1.23 million each year. The referendum previously failed in May 2008.

County Manager John Crumpton told the Board of Commissioners on Aug. 17 prior to a vote on whether to place the referendum on the ballot that the county had no debt capacity at current tax levels.

At least two other counties – Harnett and Rowan – will ask voters in November to give commissioners authority to levy the quarter-cent sales tax.

Swain to close offices five days, furlough employees

The Swain County Board of Commissioners voted Sept. 8 to institute mandatory furloughs for the county's 190 employees to help cover a budget shortfall. County government will be closed Oct. 30; Dec. 10, 23 and 31; and Jan. 19, 2010, in order to achieve the mandated 40-hour furlough for employees. Emergency medical technicians and dispatch personnel, meanwhile, will see their salaries trimmed by 2 percent.

Sheriff's Office employees will not be subject to furloughing.

New Hanover County consolidates three agencies

New Hanover County has announced that effective Oct. 20, the Parks Department, Airlie Gardens, and the Senior Resource Center will consolidate. Airlie Gardens Director Jim McDaniel will oversee the new combined agency, and Parks Director Neal Lewis will serve as an assistant director.

According to County Manager Bruce Shell, the move will make county government more customer service focused and streamlined. Shell said he expects the move will lead to future efficiencies and opportunities in programming costs and resource allocation.

In July, the county consolidated the Emergency Management and Public Safety Communications (911) departments. Services once offered by the Human Relations Department were also eliminated to trim costs.

Buncombe opens Human Services satellite office

Buncombe County opened its first Human Services satellite office Oct. 5. "Buncombe County Human Services – West" will co-locate social services, health and mental health services as well as substance abuse and aging services. The Leicester office will be open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The opening of this satellite office is a part of the county's ongoing efforts to ensure that every citizen eligible for support services can receive those services as efficiently and effectively as possible.



Orange looks good in pink

Orange County Emergency Services personnel donned original pink shirts and caps in October in observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. From left to right, Catherine Lockamy, Melissa Ayscue, Stephanie Gilmore and Brad Feren model the new attire, which was designed by a county 911 telecommunicator. The county enlisted sponsors to fund the project in full. One in eight women will get breast cancer in their lifetime. Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women, exceeded only by lung cancer. Early detection methods offering the best chance for survival include monthly breast self-exams and yearly mammography especially after the age of 40.

Photo courtesy David Hunt/Orange County

Henderson County lands prestigious planning award

Henderson County's Land Development Code (LDC) was awarded the 2009 North Carolina Marvin Collins Planning Award on Oct. 2 during the N.C. Annual Planning Conference. The award, presented by the N.C. Chapter of the American Planning Association (NCAPA), recognizes plans, programs and processes of unusually high merit adopted or enacted in the current or past two calendar years.

The LDC, adopted by the Board of Commissioners in September 2007, combines all land development ordinances into one user-friendly growth-management document drafted to accomplish the county's 2020 Comprehensive Plan.

The LDC is original in its content and approach to managing growth and development, and includes density based zoning regulations as opposed to requiring minimum lot size. The LDC provides greater flexibility, supports the preservation of rural character, and encourages appropriate development where necessary infrastructure is available. The development of the LDC from drafting to adoption took just under three years.

The NCAPA award committee found this document to be a "good model of a Unified Development Ordinance, well laid-out and easily replicable by another community." The committee stated that "the principles and objectives are listed and explained, and a particular strength is the Code's linkage to the County's Comprehensive Plan."

Census data from 1960s, 70s and 80s now online and searchable

Looking for insight into just how rapid and dramatic North Carolina has changed over the past five decades?

A digital project at the State Library of North Carolina has made state census data from the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s fully searchable online for the first time. The collection, housed in file folders at the State Data Center since it was created from federal census data decades ago, contains invaluable county- and state-level demographics information and enumeration district maps from 80 counties.

The majority of the data dates from the 1980 Census, however the maps, as well as counts of population and housing data, are available from the 1960 Census, and "Selected Characteristics" for 99 of 100 counties are available from the 1970 Census. The collection is available at statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/dimp/digital/census/index.html.

Correction

We inadvertently omitted Cumberland County Commissioner Marshall Faircloth's name from the photo of the winning team of the annual free throw competition that ran on page 8 of September's issue. Faircloth is pictured with Bertie County's L.C. Hoggard, Hertford County's Howard Hunter III and Guilford County's Skip Alston.

Clawson collects annual honor from county finance association

Dare County Finance Director David Clawson received Outstanding County Finance Officer honors for 2008-09 during the N.C. Association of County Finance Officers fall meeting, held Sept. 30 to Oct. 2 in Craven County.

Officers sworn in during the conference include: President Susan Blumenstein (Iredell), First Vice President Donna Clark (Buncombe), Second Vice President Dee Meshaw (Carteret), Secretary/Treasurer Michael Felts (Granville) and Past President Lynne Anderson (Nash).

Students get intimate look at Northampton County Government

The Northampton County Board of Commissioners kicked off an internship program of sorts in September. Each month, a select high school student will be allowed to sit in on county meetings and will receive materials such as duplicate board packets.

Arthur Jones, a senior at Northampton County High School-West, was the first student to participate in the program.

"I had a dream to reach out to young people and let them see how the county operates," Chairman Robert Carter told the *Roanoke-Chowan News-Herald*. "Let's try to encourage them every chance we get."



Cipriani honored twice at Register of Deeds conference

Rockingham County's Rebecca Cipriani walked away with two top awards at the N.C. Association of Registers of Deeds' 57th Annual Conference, held Sept. 19-22 in Raleigh. She received the Outstanding Register of Deeds award from the NCACC as well as the Eunice Ayers Distinguished Service Award.

"This has been an extremely difficult year to be a Register of Deeds in this state," Cipriani said. "There were 55 bills introduced as legislation in the General Assembly that impacted our offices. I think this is a testament to the importance of our offices and its impact on other governmental entities, business partners and the public."

Elected to serve as the organization's president last September, Cipriani passed the gavel to Duplin County's Davis Brinson at the conference.

NACo makes available new guide on jail population management

Through its partnership with NACo, the Pretrial Justice Institute has released a guide that provides detailed information for elected county policy makers on how to manage resources at the front end of the criminal justice system.

“Jail Population Management: Elected County Officials’ Guide to Pretrial Services” shows counties how they can ensure the most effective and efficient use of local resources by implementing proven policies and procedures during the pretrial stage of the criminal justice system. U.S. Department of Justice data shows that nearly two-thirds of the nation’s jail population is awaiting adjudication of a charge. The project was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Joyner awarded by IAAO

Ken Joyner, a lecturer in public finance and government with the School of Government at UNC-Chapel Hill, was honored by the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO) with the Instructor of the Year Award for 2009 during the organization’s 75th anniversary conference, held Sept. 13-16 in Louisville.

Joyner joined the SOG in January 2008. He previously served as tax administrator for Durham, Chatham, Harnett and Onslow counties. In 2008 he received IAAO’s Member of the Year Award.

Ware leads Tar Heel contingent on NADO Board

Timothy Ware, executive director of the Mid-East Commission in Washington, N.C., was elected first vice president of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) on Sept. 1 during NADO’s 42nd annual training conference in Chicago. Ware began his tenure with the Mid-East Commission in 1994 as fiscal director and assistant executive director. He was named executive director in 2002.

Two regional councils of government executive directors were elected to the 2009-10 Board of Directors: Timmy Baynes (Kerr-Tar) and Joe McKinney (Land-of-Sky).

In addition, the Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments received a 2009 Innovation Award during the conference for its Public/Private Partners in Building Restoration. NADO’s Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving the economic and community competitiveness of the nation’s regions and local communities. Franklin County Commissioner Sidney Dunston and COG officials were on-hand to accept the award, which was presented during the conference.

NADO was founded in 1967 to provide training, information and representation for regional development organizations throughout the United States.

Orange County’s online home gets a makeover

Orange County launched a redesigned Web site in September. The site can be accessed via www.co.orange.nc.us or www.orangecountync.gov. Along with a new look and feel, the site provides new online services and information.

Departmental webmasters, who

understand the services of their respective departments and are up-to-date on current and new activities, are providing the bulk of updates. The launch of the Web site represents a significant cross-departmental collaborative effort, coordinated by the Information Technologies Department.

SHORTS

Alexander: Hayden Bentley retired as sheriff Sept. 30 with 14 months left in his second term. ... **Catawba:** Fred Miller retired Sept. 30 after 20 years as Cooperative Extension director. ... **Cumberland:** The N.C. Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials named Emergency Services Director Kenneth Currie as its Communications Center Director of the Year in September. Currie has more than 25 years’ experience serving the county. He also serves as fire marshal. ... **Forsyth:** Joe Bartel retired at the end of September after 24 years as the county’s director of budget and management and 30 years with the county. ... **Graham:** Erma Orr-Phillips was appointed chief tax assessor Sept. 14 following the resignation of Blair Hyder. Orr-Phillips previously held the position. The county is currently completing a revaluation. ... **Iredell:** Former Commissioner Andrew Jennings “Jack” Waring, who served

as board chairman from 1966-68, died Sept. 13. ... The Board of Commissioners approved a master land-use plan – the 2030 Horizon Plan – on Sept. 15. ... **Lincoln:** Commissioners transferred control of 911 Communications from the Sheriff’s Office to Emergency Management on Sept. 14. ... **McDowell:** J. Hubert Haynes, who served as sheriff from 1966-78, died Sept. 21 at the age of 88. Haynes’ son, Jim, recently retired as Richmond County manager. ... **Pasquotank:** Bill Stevens retired as tax administrator Sept. 30. He served in the tax office since 1978 and was succeeded by another tax office veteran: Patrice Stewart, a 27-year county employee, took over as acting tax administrator on Oct. 1. ... **Polk:** The county’s 1859 courthouse celebrated its 150th birthday in September. ... **Richmond:** Commissioners were told in September that construction of the new judicial center should be completed by May 2010.



LOCAL ELECTED LEADERS

Academy

Strategic Leadership Education for County and Municipal Elected Officials

Local Finance: Making Sense of Annual Financial Statements

DECEMBER 2, 2009	CHAPEL HILL, SHERATON
JANUARY 13, 2010	WILMINGTON, HILTON RIVERSIDE
JANUARY 29, 2010	CONCORD, EMBASSY SUITES
FEBRUARY 17, 2010	GREENVILLE, HILTON
FEBRUARY 24, 2010	ASHEVILLE, DOUBLETREE BILTMORE
MARCH 3, 2010	KITTY HAWK, HILTON GARDEN INN

As stewards of the public trust, local elected officials must put in place the funding and infrastructure their community needs to thrive. This engaging, one-day workshop is designed to help county commissioners and city council members understand how to read annual financial statements. Elected officials will learn the right questions to ask and how the decisions they make will affect their community’s future. Participants are encouraged to invite their managers, administrators, and finance directors to attend as well.

The workshop will conclude with a 2-hour segment on ethics that meets the new statutory requirement for city and county elected officials.

This Regional LeaderShop is a program of the Local Elected Leaders Academy and is offered regionally to encourage participation and to minimize travel time. Elected officials are eligible for recognition through the NC Association of County Commissioners and the NC League of Municipalities. Scholarships are available through the Local Elected Leaders Academy.

To register online or to request scholarship information, visit www.sog.unc.edu/courses/1641/, or contact Gail Wilkins at wilkins@sog.unc.edu or 919.962.9754.

Visit www.lela.unc.edu for an up-to-date calendar of educational programs offered through the Local Elected Leaders Academy. To learn more, contact Donna Warner at 919.962.1575 or warner@sog.unc.edu.

Association connects with Turkmen

The Association hosted a delegation of nine visitors from Turkmenistan on Sept. 22 as part of the "Community Connections" program through the International Affairs Council. The Turkmen, who work in the areas of city planning, development and management, municipal service delivery and public-private partnerships, met with David F. Thompson, Patrice Roesler and Lisa Nolen to learn about the structure of county government in North Carolina.

The visit to NCACC was part of a three-week visit by the regional and republic officials, who expressed special interest in the differences between the roles of elected and appointed officials, the authority to organize the government, our county tax structure and our expenditure patterns.

Attendees included the head of the Ministry of Finance of Turkmenistan, the chief engineer from Ahal Regional Authority, the chief architect of Mary Regional Authority, the head of the Ministry of Construction for Turkmenistan, the head of the Department for Privatization and Entrepreneurship for Turkmenistan, a specialist in industry and construction from the Dashoguz Regional Authority, the head of the Human Resources Management Department for the Balkan Regional Authority, and the specialist for



Nine public officials from Turkmenistan met with NCACC Outreach Coordinator Lisa Nolen (third from left), Executive Director David F. Thompson (sixth from left) and Deputy Director Patrice Roesler (right) on Sept. 22.

Photo by Jason King

Architecture and Urban Planning for the Lebap Regional Authority.

A former constituent republic of the Soviet Union, Turkmenistan is located in Central Asia and borders Iran to the north. Community Connections is a program of USAID that provides training and cultural exposure to participants from former Soviet states who are business entrepreneurs, government officials

and other professionals.

Founded in 1973 by Gov. Terry Sanford, the International Affairs Council is a community-based organization that champions knowledge and understanding of world affairs and culture in the Research Triangle region by planning itineraries of visiting dignitaries and professionals interested in business development, education, and other topics.

Agricultural projects may qualify for grant

The N.C. Tobacco Trust Fund Commission (NCTTFC) has announced a new grant cycle for 2010. The application period ends Dec. 4, 2009, and grant awards will be announced by May 1, 2010.

Traditional funding priorities have focused on community and economic development, farm diversification, skill and resource development and increasing farm income. Emphasis is placed on projects that will benefit the agricultural community and increase farm income. Strong regional projects affecting a high number of people are considered.

The NCTTFC was created by the N.C. General Assembly to assist tobacco farmers, tobacco quota holders, persons engaged in tobacco-related businesses, individuals displaced from tobacco-related employment, and tobacco product component businesses in the state due to the adverse effects of the Master Settlement Agreement.

To access the grant application and guidelines and/or view past winning projects, visit www.tobaccotrustfund.org/grants/index.htm.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the NCTTFC and discuss their particular project before going through the grant application process. If you are considering applying for a grant, contact Program Officer Jeff Jennings at (919) 733-2160.



RISK MANAGEMENT POOLS

While insurance companies have customers, the NCACC Risk Management Pools have members who are involved in developing risk management products and the provision of those products.

Rather than being driven by profits, the Pools are driven by service to members.

Ask about becoming part of our MEMBER-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION.

Contact us at (919) 719-1100, or visit www.ncacc.org/rmp.htm.

A MEMBER-DRIVEN ORGANIZATION