

RUTHERFORD COUNTY MANAGER

County Commissioners

Julius Owens, *Chairman*
William Eckler, *Vice Chairman*
Susan G. Crowe
Eddie Holland
Roger Richard

Carl Classen, *County Manager*
Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

September 28, 2012

To: County Commissioners

From: Carl Classen, County Manager

Weekly Report Items **Week Ending September 28, 2012**

General:

This is a highlight of items from the previous week. It is not meant to be exhaustive but to inform the Commissioners and Department Heads.

Board of Elections:

The Election staff has had a busy week! We are in the middle of testing all of the equipment and have issued 138 absentee ballots by mail or email. Staff is completing the recruitment of workers and have mailed letters detailing their options for training. Yesterday almost 1000 letters were mailed to voters that need to provide additional information or voters that must show identification before or when they come to vote. During this week, we processed 129 new registrations, 138 duplicate registrations, 78 changes of information and mailed out 165 verification cards.

Building Inspections:

Building Inspections issued 47 permits this week totaling \$5,734 in permit fees. Inspectors also conducted 140 inspections and followed up on several various building related concerns and complaints. The Director dealt with several Flood Plain issues involving the NC Division of Emergency Management. This week, the Department received several commercial plans for review that involve various new construction and renovation projects. Lastly, staff has been short one inspector this week as Blake continues to enjoy his honeymoon.

Clerk to the Board:

Agenda packages are on line for the October 1 Regular and October 1 Special Meetings. One Special Meeting at 4:00 pm will allow the County Commissioners to review and discuss the revised version of the Rules of Procedure for Rutherford County Commissioners. The Second Special Meeting, at 5:00 pm, will be a closed session for consultation with legal counsel. Both meetings will be held at the Rutherford County Office Building. The staff has been gearing up for the Bechtler Documentary Premiere on September 29. Be sure to attend this very interesting documentary which depicts a portion of Rutherford County's rich history. The Bechtler House is open during specific hours and you will certainly enjoy your visit. Several Commissioners attended Working, Growing, and Thriving Here presented by the Economic Development Department, the New Century Scholars Induction Ceremony, and a meeting regarding recycling services.

Cooperative Extension:

The County Extension Director continues to assist clients with technical information through phone calls, office, and field visits. The Director attended a District Extension Director meeting in Canton, met with the Rutherford County Cattlemen's Association Board of Directors to plan fall educational events and to work on ideas for a scholarship fundraiser. The Director also met with the Farm/City committee to finalize plans for this year's program. The 4-H Youth Development Agent held the last poultry practice for this season, preparing for the Cleveland County contest. Youth practiced grading ready-to-cook chicken carcasses, identifying parts, and judging laying hens. 4-H Health Rocks has been introduced to the County's Community Engagement Team and the Forest City Dunbar afterschool program. 4-H Health Rocks is a drug prevention program that uses hands-on activities to create awareness of the effects of drugs, improve self esteem, promote healthy decision making skills, and promote overall healthy living. This curriculum is for youth ages 8-13 and is both research and evidence based. The 2013-14 Science Fair is being planned. 4-H is partnering locally with KidSenses to promote science lessons and experiments with all youth in the county. The staff is also working on building a Vermicomposting bin to teach fifth graders about using worms to make compost. The Family and Consumer Science Agent attended a Community Engagement Team meeting, attended a West District Latino Task Force meeting, taught "Give Your Heart a Healthy Beat" class, and prepared for Grilling and Chilling. The Agricultural agent assisted with the operation of the Farmer's Market, networked with Pinnacle Elementary, Chase High and East Rutherford's FFA organizations for "Youth in Agriculture" programs. 122 contacts made.

County Manager:

The County Manager attended numerous meetings this week. The week began with a Western Highlands meeting in Asheville. The afternoon presented meetings with Finance Director Paula Roach and Planning Director Danny Searcy regarding project updates, and a Hicks Grove Community Meeting regarding various services. Mr. Classen held a teleconference with James Kilgo, Solid Waste Director and Rob Taylor with DEAO, attended a Business Advancement meeting sponsored by the Economic Development Office, and met with Bill Schrum and staff with Republic Services and Solid Waste Director James Kilgo. Additional meetings attended by County Manager Carl Classen were with the local municipalities on enhanced recycling services effort, as well as, an Airport Economic Development meeting with Bob Howard, James Luther and Matt Blackwell. Mr. Classen reviewed the weekly report, and will attend the Chillin and Grillin sponsored by Cooperative Extension on Saturday and attended the film premier "Gold Fever and the Bechtler Mint."

Economic Development:

This week the Economic Development Executive Director met with a NC Department of Commerce Developer to review potential large sites available for industrial development; presented the new Business Retention & Expansion program to a group of community leaders who have been identified to assist with the program; continues to work on an existing expansion project; met with local property owner to get familiar with available building product; met with a candidate for County Commissioner to discuss economic development activities, attended an economic development meeting at the Rutherford County airport; hosted the NC Department of Commerce and industrial prospect to view two existing buildings; and prepared a response to an RFP for a biomass project. The Economic Development Project Administrator finalized the BR&E info for introduction of program to Business Advancement Team; attended the BR&E introduction meeting; created BR&E informational brochures and got quotes from printing companies for production. The Project Administrator also confirmed meeting time, location, etc. with Rutherford County Schools for October 30th BR&E introduction to local industry and county leaders and other allies; responded to request from County Manager for historic unemployment information; processed and posted invoices for budget and finance office; researched and created updates to website; updated remainder of Existing Industry Surveys in order to get accurate and up-to-date information to establish visitation schedule for BR&E; setup online ordering with Duffies Copier Consultant to promote efforts to purchase locally; and provided clerical assistance to Executive Director.

Emergency Services/Emergency Management/Fire Marshal:

This week **EMS Personnel** responded to 181 calls. The EMS Public Relations Team attended the Ellenboro Fair. EMS staff provided community education and demonstration at Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Church. EMS Administration staff met with key personnel to discuss building designs for the Southeastern EMS base, conducted field training officer orientation for newly promoted FTO staff, attended a public meeting in the Hicks Grove Community, and continues to develop vehicle specifications for new ambulances. **Emergency Management/Fire Marshal** conducted two missing person searches, performed maintenance on the fire safety house, worked on training schedule for the fire departments, completed 2011-12 Emergency Management Performance Grant activities, and selected 2012-13 grant activities to complete for next cycle.

Finance:

The Finance staff continues to work on the Fiscal Year End closeout reports. The County auditors are here and are being assisted by the Finance Director, as well as, the Workers Compensation Auditor. The Director continues work on completing year end reports and finalizing the refinancing. The Director attended the weekly project update meeting with Danny Searcy and Carl Classen. The Assistant Director continues to work on the Vehicle Fleet.

Human Resources:

The HR Office held meetings to discuss personnel issues and retirements. The HR Director, along with Sherry Lavender, Listing Supervisor, conducted interviews for the Senior Tax Tech position. The Director met with Sidney Brown, Workers Compensation Auditor, and attended a Risk Management meeting. The HR office hosted Colleen Heptig, a representative from Nationwide 457. HR staff arranged the Flu Shot Clinic for October 8th from 10:00 am-2:00 pm. The Health Department will be administering the clinic at the County Office Building. Staff also scheduled the annual Open Season for Colonial and Flexible Benefit changes for the week of October 8-12.

Information Technology:

Lots of excitement in the IT Department this week. Staff was involved in a historical event in Rutherford County as the press was delivered to the Bechtler House. Staff efforts paid off as the camera has been working great and keeping an eye on the press and "Charlie" (the mannequin setup to portray Christopher Bechtler). Our next project is to get security cameras installed at the Bechtler Mint Site. A meeting was held to draw up a plan of action for lighting and cameras for the actual mine. Additionally, meetings are being scheduled with all county employees to review the updated Technology Use Policy. Meetings will be held after the first of the year; however, the policy went into effect September 10, 2012. A copy was emailed to each county employee for their personal review. The IT Department is preparing for the upcoming election. Staff is helping the Board of Elections Department get laptops ready to go out to all the precincts for the November general election. Progress is being made at DSS with NCFast and getting the employees ready to start uploading information. An additional meeting was held to discuss the placement of 33 new cameras at the Detention Center. One word of caution--we had an issue where someone restored their computer back to factory settings, we ask that no one try to fix their computer issues by restoring until the IT Department has had a chance to determine the problem. This caused the computer to be out of function for a full 24 hours.

Library:

The Friends of the Mountains Branch Library are having an Herb Fest on September 29th from 9:00 – 4:00 at the Lake Lure Inn. The public is invited. There will be booths with culinary and medicinal herbs, products made from herbs, and speakers discussing growing and using herbs. Chefs from Medina's Village Bistro in Chimney Rock will demonstrate: Culinary Fun-Herbs, Oils, & Flowers. Edith Edwards "The Queen of Kudzu" will present "What's New with Kudzu." Dr. Jeannine Davis, Extension Specialist at NC University, will present "Raising Herbs for Health and Profit in Your Own Back Yard." Herbalist, Michelle Tanner, will present "Herbs for Mind and Body." ALL DAY will be Master Gardeners, Ron and Janet Hoover, Plant Wise Solutions Nursery and Plants, plus food tastings and over 30 door prizes. There will be an author luncheon at noon featuring Nan K. Chase author of *Eat Your Yard*. Tickets for the festival are \$5 or \$25 for the luncheon (includes price of admission). Children under 12 are free. Please call the library, 828-625-0456, for more information. Voter registration forms are available at the County Library. The Adult Reference Librarian is attending a conference for *Rural and Small Libraries* in Raleigh this week. The CMC Consortium met on Tuesday and discussed

common goals for the next fiscal year. The County Library book sale is next week beginning Thursday and ending on Saturday. For more information call 287-6117.

Planning/Parks and Recreation:

The garage had 11 preventative maintenance service calls, 16 repairs, 4 tire service calls and 12 state inspections/other repairs, while maintenance completed 18 service calls and groundskeeping. Ground has been broken on the restrooms at Frank West Park and progress continues on the Bechtler site in creating a very attractive mineshaft entrance. The Bechtler Mint Press and Bechtler House are in place and the UNC-TV documentary premiere is Saturday, September 29 at RS Central. The small gym at Harris' Linder Park is receiving improvements of interior painting and new rubber flooring for the fitness classes held there. In Greystone, we held an onsite pre-bid meeting for several contractors as this will likely be a formal bid. The bid opening will be held in October with those results to be on the November Board of Commissioners agenda. Lastly, the County has reached a proposed settlement agreement (pending approval by the Board) with Lexon Bond Company for the infrastructure at Queens Gap development.

Register of Deeds:

The Register of Deeds office had an active week with 345 transactions collecting \$14,845.25.

Sheriff:

August 2012

Calls for Service:	4414
Warrants Served/Total Arrest:	257/215
Domestic Calls:	183
Involuntary Commitments/Hours.:	29/18.60 Man Hrs.
Civil Papers Served:	369
Experte's Served:	18
Evictions:	8
Animals Pickup/Surrender:	378
Animals Returned to Owners or Rescued:	206
Animal Control Calls for Service:	201
New Cases to Detectives/Road Patrol:	177/65
Pill Drop Collections:	5310.5 Doses Units/22 ml of liquid
Average Daily Inmate Confinement:	244
Gun Purchase Permits Issued:	139
Carry Concealed Permits Issued:	0
Project Lifesaver Clients/Contact Hours:	13/22.0 Man Hrs.
Registered Sex Offenders/Contact Hours:	173/20.0 Man Hrs.

Please join us in congratulations to:

New <u>full-time</u> employees:	Shane Holtzclaw, Road Patrol Scott Schiefelbeir, Communications
New <u>part-time</u> employees:	Amanda Scott, Detention Officer

Social Services:

Income Maintenance staff continue to prepare for the rollout of the first phase of Families Assessing Services Through Technology (NC FAST). The NC FAST state liaison was in the office on Wednesday to meet with supervisors and IT Staff to prepare for the rollout and for the training to begin on October 8. The Income Maintenance Administrator and Food Stamp Supervisor visited area grocery stores on Thursday afternoon to share information about NC FAST and to solicit their help sharing important information with their customers. A state reviewer was in the office to conduct a IV-E Funds audit on foster care records. The purpose of the review is to ensure that cases are coded correctly and that IV-E funds are properly utilized. The Director, Fiscal Officer, and Children's Services Supervisors participated in a conference call regarding IV-E coding and funding relating to Child Protective Services. The regular monthly supervisor's meeting

was held on Wednesday, and the Children's Services staff meeting was held on Friday. On Tuesday a retirement reception was held for Sue Ellen Camden-Lee, Work First Employment Social Worker, whose last day will be on Friday. She has been a valuable asset to the agency and will be missed. We wish her the best of luck and much happiness.

Soil and Water:

The Admin/Education Specialist sent out District meeting notices and Farmland Preservation meeting notices. The Specialist continues to work on planning the 5th Grade Conservation Field Day scheduled for October 2nd at R-S Central High School and attended the Farm City planning meeting held on Thursday, September 27th. The Water Quality Specialist inspected ongoing projects, gave technical information, and helped with installation of a well.

Solid Waste:

The Solid Waste Department served 344 customers, hauled 59 loads from convenience centers, and shipped 34 loads to Lenoir. Duke Power is installing the poles for the methane gas project. CEC and Power Secure were on site this week to start the flare and the generator as an initial test. The Director attended the weekly conference call for the transfer station, held a meeting with Republic Services to discuss recycling in Rutherford County, and attended several meetings with Carl Classen and Rob Taylor from DEAO. Interviews for the part time scale operator and convenience center floater positions have been scheduled. David Garrett worked on site this week, as well as, Wes Scarlett with Geophysical Consultants came to perform the fall water testing. The Director has applied for a grant from the State to help with the cost of the new building. Steve Nanney, Solid Waste Code Officer, attended court this week on the Avondale Case.

Tax:

The Appraisal Department answered 52 phone calls, assisted 7 citizens with the present use program and 1 citizen who came in to the office. Staff processed 2 splits. Appraisers worked 63 permits.

GIS/Mapping/Land Records/Addressing assisted 82 taxpayers, answered 140 phone calls, issued 3 pre-permits, and reviewed 1 plat. One project is currently in progress. Land Records printed 48 newly recorded deeds, transferred 56 deeds and 5 estates. 30 new tax accounts were set up. GIS completed 7 splits, 1 merge, created 31 new maps and filled 1 data request. The Addressing Department assigned 2 new addresses, updated 36 addresses, and installed 19 new road signs and maintenance on 3. **Tax Collections** staff continues to work on multiple tax foreclosures. Staff has met with the Town of Spindale to discuss values of property that are subject to foreclosure and clean up issues they may have with these properties. Also, staff have begun to work on a plan for filing debt set-off for delinquent taxes in a more timely manner and have spent time working to develop needs to have incorporated into a possible new website for the Tax Office. Currently the site is updated only once a month. The new website will allow for taxpayer interaction and the ability of the taxpayer to retrieve more information for themselves with updates occurring daily. Hopefully, this will reduce the number of telephone calls to the office. Staff has also begun to examine software issues in preparation of a learning conference with Keystone next week. **Billing/Listing:** This week staff completed interviews for the business audit position and expect to make an offer to a new employee. The Tax Office is anxious to begin this training and to begin a dialogue with local businesses about property tax listing.

Transit:

This week Transit drove 8,802 miles, transported 1,036 passengers and collected \$12,463.57 in revenue. There were no safety violations. The Director completed an impact analysis on current Medicaid changes and how they will affect Transit and DSS at the local level. Transit met with EMS to discuss possible new revenue sources through convalescent care for both agencies. Transit also met with CTS who demonstrated automated software and mobile device units for all vehicles. New services include the availability of limited grant funds for employment transportation. Passengers must first fill out an application to determine eligibility and frequency of travel.

Veterans Office:

The staff made 195 contacts this week. Staff also had 124 telephone interviews, with 103 mailouts for veterans to complete documents and requests for service. The Service Officer attended a Veterans Day Ceremony meeting and a Veterans Organization meeting.

Special Recognition Highlights

REMINDER ---Cycle NC and its 1,000+ riders will be coming through Rutherford County on Monday, October 1. Employees and the public are asked not to park in the County Annex Parking lot until after 2:30 PM that day. County employee parking is available in the gravel (not paved) parking lot behind PNC Bank.



**ATTEND THE
FILM PREMIERE!**

GOLD FEVER & the BECHTLER MINT

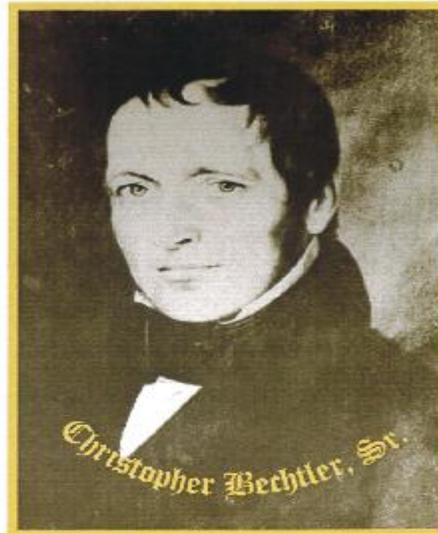
**See the first screening of the
UNC-TV documentary filmed in
Rutherford County.**

September 29, 7 p.m.

R-S Central H. S. Auditorium

Admission is free.

**The story of Christopher Bechtler's
Mint during the North Carolina
gold rush of the 1830s.**



The Rutherfordton 225th Anniversary & The Bechtler Documentary Committees



Bechtler Press—pictured with Town of Rutherford Manager Karen Andrews and TDA Director Michelle Whitaker



Town Workers leveling the press



Keith Ward unwrapping press



Wednesday September 19, 2012, 11:42 AM

Rutherford County Sheriff's Office



Community: Save the date! Operation Medicine Drop is scheduled for Saturday, September 29, 2012.

Operation Medicine Drop is scheduled for Saturday, September 29th from 10am to 4pm at the following three locations:

Holland Furniture
177 N. Main St., Henrietta

Food Lion, Rutherfordton
169 Railroad Ave.

Food Lion, Forest City
668 S. Broadway

Operation Medicine Drop is a prescription drug take-back event that allows residents to turn in their unused/expired prescription and over the counter medications. Proper disposal of unwanted medications helps prevent accidental poisonings, drug abuse, and groundwater contamination. Equally important-- it also helps prevent prescription drugs from falling into the wrong hands.

Safe Kids North Carolina is partnering with the State Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the N.C. Department of Insurance and other agencies to set up Operation Medicine Drop events throughout the state where people can safely dispose of old or unneeded prescriptions and over-the-counter medications.

In Rutherford County, Operation Medicine Drop is the result of collaboration between the Drug Enforcement Administration, U.S. Attorney's Office of Western North Carolina, the State Bureau of Investigation, Rutherford County Sheriff's Office, Forest City Police Department, Spindale Police Department, United Way's Community Engagement Team, and SafeKids of Rutherford County. We also thank our drop-off site hosts: the Ellenboro Fire Department, Food Lion of Rutherfordton, and Food Lion of Forest City.

*Operation Medicine Drop cannot accept bio-hazardous waste or chemotherapy medications.

CSX Railroad Foundation awards grant to sheriff's department

FROM
STAFF REPORTS

FOREST CITY — CSX Railroad Foundation has approved funding through a grant for the purchase of Automated External Defibrillators for the Rutherford County Sheriff's Department.

These AEDs will be deployed in road patrol vehicles, because officers and vehicles are typically the first responders to calls for service that may require First Aid and/or CPR, depending on circumstances and the nature of the call.

"I am deeply appreciative for the grant and sincerely thankful for CSX Railroad in joining me and the Rutherford County Sheriff's Office in our efforts to save lives and provide a better quality of life for our citizens," said Sheriff Chris Francis.

"AED's will be deployed in



Contributed Photo

Chief Deputy Jeff Buchanan (l-r) Sheriff Chris Francis accepting the grant from CSX Railroad Special Agent's J.C Walker and Brian Ridge.

our Sheriff's Office road patrol vehicles and when an unfortunate situation presents itself, we will now have this extra ability to save a life," he said.

The Rutherford County Sheriff's Office will continue to pursue grants that will hopefully provide AED's in all of the Sheriff's Office road patrol vehicles in the future.