



August 10, 2015

Weekly Report

Highlight of Departmental Activities

The Weekly Report showcases the activities and accomplishments of the many Departments within Rutherford County Government. Click on the directory lists, headings and text in blue to be linked to more information.

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Agriculture/Cooperative Ext.

Family and Consumer Sciences

- Chaired board meeting for Partnership For Children.
- Participated in nutrition webinar from Penn State Extension.
- Attended professional association state meeting.

Airport

The airport sold 1,375.4 gallons of 100LL to 38 aircraft and 687.0 gallons of Jet A to 5 aircraft last week.



Fueling helicopter, UH-72 Tim
(pictured left).

Board of Elections

Almost 2000 voter cards were mailed to the registered voters in Caroleen-Cliffside precinct this week. The Board voted to move the polling place for this precinct to Cliffside Fire Department and the mailing was to notify the voters of this change. Work has begun on new training materials for the Chief Judges and Judges that will be appointed later this month. The Director is closely monitoring House Bill 943 that could affect the ballot this November.

Building Inspections

Building Inspections closed out July with some very promising numbers. The department issued 181 permits totaling \$30,590 in fees and with project values totaling over \$4.5 million. Our inspectors were also very busy in the field while conducting 731 inspections. As solar farms are a very hot topic recently, our department has had several projects apply for permitting in the last two weeks. These projects encompass a 36 acre project with a value of \$5.2 million, a 57 acre project valued at \$1.05 million and a third project of 10 acres valued at \$2.5 million.

As a testament to the hard working staff in our department, two of our employees have been selected to serve on State Level boards for our industry. Shane Dotson has been appointed to serve as Western Regional representative to the NC Plumbing Inspections Association and Director Jason Ruff was appointed to serve as Region 1 Director serving the western 27 counties on the Board for the NC Building Inspectors Association. New employee, **Cory Hill**, Building/Fire Inspector, being sworn in on August 4, 2015 (pictured above with **Kim Aldridge**, Deputy Clerk and **Director Jason Ruff**).



County Manager and Commissioners

It has been a very busy week at the County Office. The County Manager, Commissioners and staff were involved in the Board of the Commissioners' monthly meeting on Monday evening. Among various items on the agenda, the Manager presented a brief report regarding the <http://www.rutherfordcountync.gov/PublicInformation> link that is available on the county's website. This link provides the public with updated activities, events and news.

Manager Garrison, along with Fire Marshal, Roger Hollifield, toured the Emergency Communication Tower site at the top of Hickory Nut Falls (pictured on page 3).

Manager Garrison also enjoyed a visit to the Old Cliffside Church location.



Midweek, the Manager and various county officials attended a major commercial development announcement ceremony...85-room



Hampton Inn & Suites coming to Forest City by the spring of 2017! Among those in attendance were Lake Lure Mayor Bob Keith, Rutherfordton Mayor Jimmy Dancy, county Manager Steve Garrison, Spindale Mayor Mickey Bland and other County officials (pictured left).

The Manager attended the Golden LEAF Foundation meeting in Hendersonville. Golden LEAF has begun to implement its Community-Based Grantsmaking Initiative in the Western Region Prosperity Zone. Counties involved in this round of the program are: Buncombe, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, and Transylvania. Golden LEAF encourages county leaders who represent interests in economic development, workforce training, education, infrastructure and health care to attend the meetings.

The week concluded with several additional departmental meetings, project discussions, appointments, conference calls, public relations, advising, and preparation for various responsibilities.



Hickory Nut Falls, Chimney Rock
Pictures by Steve Garrison

Economic Development

This week, the Economic Development Department responded to an RFI and attended a commercial announcement made by the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, Town of Forest City and Hotel One Incorporated at Forest City Town Hall, as well as a Golden Leaf session in Henderson County. Economic Development staff continues to be busy reaching out to industry representatives to meet grant reporting deadlines, and working on marketing and advertising efforts including increasing our social media presence.

Finance

The Finance Office continues working to close out the fiscal year and prepare for the auditors. The Finance Office has processed accounts payable and payroll this week. The Deputy Director attended a Golden LEAF Regional Grant Meeting on Wednesday with the County Manager, Public Works Director and EDC Staff. The Finance Office attended Monday's Commissioner Meeting and was recognized by the Commissioners for their recent achievement for GFOA Certificate of Excellence. Once again, thanks ladies for being a great team, your hard work and dedication (pictured left).



Press Release on page 4.

Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

Fire Marshal and staff:

- Assisted in planning and coordination of the Carolina Brotherhood Ride through Rutherford County on Wednesday. This is a group of bicycle riders made up of law enforcement and firefighters promoting awareness and raising funds to provide emotional and financial support for the families of those who lost their lives in the line of duty from the Carolinas. The group stopped in Golden Valley for a brief rest stop between a ride between Marion and Monroe (pictured right).
- Provided a tour for the County Manager of some of the emergency communications sites in the County.
- Performed maintenance on the fire safety house.
- Purchased equipment for hazardous materials response from grant funds from the N.C. Department of Public Safety.





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For Immediate Release

FINANCIAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

Rutherford County---The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting has been awarded to the County of Rutherford by Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for its comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR). The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

An Award of Financial Reporting Achievement (AFRA) is awarded to the individual(s), department, or agency designated by the government as primarily responsible for its having earned the award-winning CAFR. We are pleased to announce that Rutherford County Finance Department qualifies for the Certificate of Achievement of Excellence in Financial Reporting. This was presented to:

Paula Roach, Finance Director, and her staff at the Board of Commissioners Monthly Meeting, August 3, 2015.

The CAFR has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR. The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals with offices in Chicago, Illinois and Washington, D.C.

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County Commissioners

Bryan A. King, *Chairman* **Eddie Holland**
Alan Toney, *Vice Chairman* **Greg Lovelace**
Michael Benfield

Steve Garrison, *County Manager*
Hazel S. Haynes, *Clerk to the Board*
Richard Williams, *County Attorney*

Human Resources

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. The HR Director attended the regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners. The HR Director, along with Danny Searcy, conducted interviews for the Project Manager position. The director attended a conference call with Becky Veazy to finalize details for the updates to the Personnel Policy, attended a JCPC meeting, and met with April Young regarding the “New Manager Orientation”. EMS and Transit are currently accepting applications. Apply at Rutherfordcountync.gov or 289 North Main Street. As the summer continues to heat up, remember to stay hydrated!! Here are a few good tips:

- **Heat and sun**

Summer is the hardest season on our bodies and the season that we spend the most time outside. Spending too much time in the heat, combined with physical activity, can quickly lead to dehydration and heat stroke. Taking frequent breaks to drink water and resting in shade can prevent serious repercussions. If you begin to feel confused, have a headache or experience nausea, get somewhere to cool off immediately. If you are inside with no air conditioning, be sure to keep a flow of air constant with fans and open windows and doors. And don't forget to put sunscreen on children—and yourself—as you spend time in the sun.

- **Pets**

Even though we have a tendency to believe that a pet's furry coat protects them from extreme heat and cold, that's simply not true. Pets are at risk for many of the same summer hazards as humans. Keep pets on leashes and don't leave your pet unattended for periods of time outdoors. If your pet stays outdoors, be sure to provide them plenty of water and a shady place to cool off.

Library

Library Director:

The director worked on developing a Strategic Planning public survey due out in September. At this time, the survey will be available online and in paper form at all 3 County libraries as well as the Norris and Spindale Libraries. The director also worked with County Maintenance to relocate shelving units located in the soon to be Makerspace to the meeting room area in the rear of the library. The small meeting room will be converted to a Genealogy Section with open hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from noon until 5 pm and by appointment. Keep your eyes open for other changes coming to the County Library as we make space for improving patrons' library experiences.

IT Librarian:

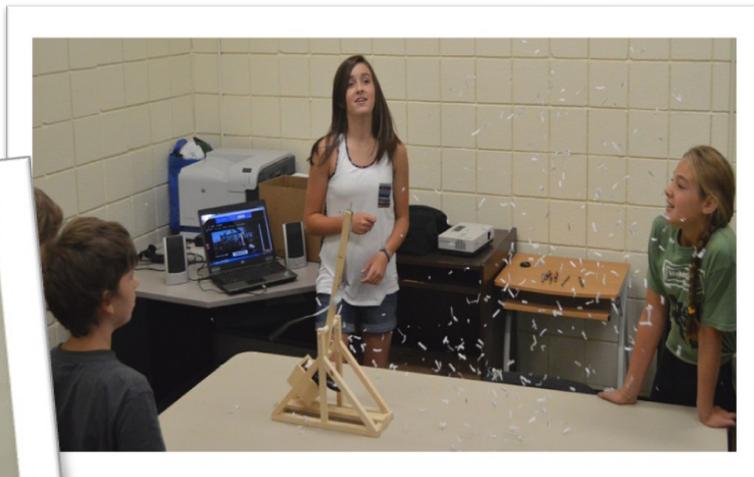
Big changes are underway with the library's technology offerings! The public computers at the County Library in Spindale and the Mountains Branch in Lake Lure were moved to a fiber optic network. This move more than doubled the bandwidth available for citizens using the public computers and wifi. The makerspace continues to take shape as library and Maintenance staff work to convert the old bookmobile bay into an area suitable for building and learning. A BIG thank you to the guys in Maintenance for doing the heavy lifting (literally)!! April and Kenneth also met with the new Makerspace Advisory Committee for the first time last week. This small group of volunteers will help us make sure the programs and activities we offer in the makerspace align with the interests of the community.

Marketing/Outreach Coordinator:

The last and final week of Maker Camp ended in success! The campers experimented with a Trebuchet and figured out exactly what they needed to do to fling a rubber ball and then confetti (two very different experiments, by the way!). They also made some delicious ice cream in a bag and enjoyed that

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yummy treat on a very hot day. They even shared a little. Maker Camp was basically the “soft opening” of our Maker Space which is due to open in September. Please call the Library if you would like more information on our new Maker Space (pictures right and below).



Mountains Branch:

Joy Sharp and Angie Turner worked on the Volunteer Brunch to honor our outstanding volunteer staff. The brunch was held Saturday, August 1st and was a wonderful time of laughter and fellowship, not to mention good food. Joy Sharp worked on monthly statistic reports and the Librarian's Report to the Friends of the Library. She attended the Friends meeting on August 4th. Two computer classes were also held at Mountains Branch this week.

Director April Young received the William L. Woolard Partner in Service Award from Lion Penny Watkins of the Lake Lure Lions' Club. April is the first ever recipient of this service award from the Lake Lure Lions' Club. It was awarded on June 25, 2015 at the Lions Club Award Ceremony. (pictured right).



Public Works and Planning

Maintenance has been very busy in completing TrackIT work orders, groundskeeping, HVAC issues, and keeping up with preventative maintenance on equipment. The garage consistently has a high tempo of repair and service activity on a daily basis, in addition to NC Safety inspections, and a number of preventative maintenance needs with the County's fleet of vehicles. The director has participated in several meetings with the County Manager and other department heads.



Planning and Projects continues actively moving forward on the Southeastern EMS and Library construction (pictured above, right and below).



Rail Trail continues to receive improvements. Pictured to right is one of the ten new benches along the Thermal Belt Rail Trail.



Revenue Department

The Revenue Department is current working 3842 - November motor vehicle renewals and handled 57 VTS assists. The 2015 Tax bills mailed out on Friday, July 31st so the office answered 969 phone calls and assisted 399 customers this week. We also completed 4 plat reviews and answered 4 data requests. Appraisers completed 93 building permits and 148 field reviews. A total of 59 new documents were recorded and 30 new accounts were set up. Transfers consisted of 58 straights, 12 estates, 2 merges and 4 splits. GIS created 8 new maps. The GIS website had 157,347 hits and 109,918 successful searches. E911 addressing assigned 3 new addresses and updated 35 addresses with new owner information. Part time maintenance workers completed maintenance on 7 road signs. The PUV program mailed 17 letters, and assisted 19 program members. Staff processed 3 exclusions/deferments and 3 discoveries. Electronic payments consisted of 25 by credit card, 50 by website and 5 over the phone. Collection action consisted of 29 newspaper items. Staff completed 8 occupancy taxes, 32 overpayments and 11 bankruptcy issues. In person taxpayers at the counter brought in 353 tax payments. 22 new deeds were certified for recording purposes.

Senior Center

The Senior Center celebrated “Bargain Hunter’s Week” this week. We had an activity called “Coupon Savings Tips”. Barbara and Crystal presented several ways to save money on your grocery bill. They also shared information on what stores will accept coupons and what are the best days and times to shop to maximize savings and take home the best bargains. We continued “Bargain Hunter’s Week” with a trip to Shelby thrift stores and craft time making a coupon organizer.

Lastly, we sponsored an intergenerational event called “Beginners Art Project for Grandparents & Grandkids”.

Upcoming:

Zumba at 6:45 on August 10, 17, 31

Sheriff’s Department

Mr. Larry Crowe, owner of Sunnyside Orchard on U.S. Hwy 221-South in Rutherford County, donated peaches to the Rutherford County Sheriff’s Office. Mr. Crowe has been donating fruit to the Rutherford County Sheriff Office for over twenty years. The peaches will be given to participants of the Rutherford County Sheriff’s Office, “Are-U-Okay” program, which is a free telephone reassurance program, offered to citizens of Rutherford County. The “Are You Oaky” program, which was implemented in late 1990, is designed to check on our seniors and help them and their family to have peace of mind. This “Are You Oaky” program provides the participants with the knowledge that someone cares and will be checking on them daily.

Pictured is Sheriff Chris Francis thanking Mr. Crowe for his donation.

For more information on the “Are-U-Okay” program, contact Lt. Leon Godlock (828) 287-6395.



Soil & Water

District Staff attended the Rutherford District Board Meeting and an Area District Issues meeting held in Asheville.

The Admin/Education Specialist worked on the District Annual Report, District Agenda and Meeting folder, and 2015 Conservation Field Day planning.

The Agriculture Cost Share Technician worked with landowners on project planning and attended 2 days for NRCS computer training.

Solid Waste

Customers served 405
Loads hauled from convenience centers 63
Loads shipped to Lenoir 34
Recycling loads shipped to Conover 3
Tire customers 19

The Director has been working with Human Resources to find ways to reduce the dangers of bush hogging, held several internal meetings with employees, and met with many different vendors to get pricing on items. The office staff has completed the yearly reports and have submitted them to the state. The transfer station staff continues to process the MSW and recycling. Also, they continue to pile the metal and wrap electronics for storage. Shop employees continue to work on the equipment while also performing preventative maintenance. C&D staff has been busy processing the tonnages that are coming in while also hauling dirt to be used as cover. Work continues at the airport with bush hogging and the weekly mowing of the grass. The landfill has had six community service workers this week. Frank Chyz and the director will attend the Forest City Town Meeting to discuss recycling on Monday August 17, 2015. Work continues on executing this year's recycling grants from the state.

Please continue to recycle!!!!

Tourism Development Authority

County Commissioners named Richard Lundy, marketing manager at Rumbling Bald Resort at Lake Lure, chairman of the TDA board at Monday night's meeting.

Transportation Services

Director Kerry Giles unfortunately got to experience Wake County EMS service in order to compare to Rutherford County EMS this past week while visiting Raleigh....broken ankle (pictured right). Get well soon, Kerry !

Emergency Medical Services:

EMS held interviews this week for the new Medical Billing Technician position. The walls are up at the new Southeast EMS station as construction continues to move forward (pictured below).

Staff also met with Wireless Communications to walk through the radio requirements for the new Southeast station.

Director and Operations Manager continue to document Standard Operating Procedures, specifically for the new billing component of the EMS department to ensure redundancy and checks and balances.



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TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Emergency Calls	199	168
Convalescent Calls	64	59

Transit Department:

Transportation Services Director attended a NCDOT meeting in Raleigh this week to discuss the scope of NCDOT’s strategic planning process for individual transit systems. Staff also worked on a revision to the Appalachian Regional Commission grant for FY 15-16 funds. Staff have also begun planning for Transit’s 25th Anniversary celebration in September. More information to follow.



TYPE	CURRENT WEEK	WEEKLY AVG
Total Miles	10,136	10,056
# of Local Trips	1,105	1,149
# of Out of County Trips	54	81
# Unduplicated Passengers	212	241
Total Revenue	\$12,639	\$15,385

Veterans Services

Operation Home Front Project

Shop at the Dollar Tree...they are collecting school supplies for veteran’s school-aged children. Marie Champion, Director, picks up supplies on Mondays and will be handing out to children. Only two weeks to collect so help support the Operation Home Front Project.

Mail In	53
Mail Out	75
Fax	211
Phone Calls In/Out	87
Veteran Contacts	196



north carolina's
**RUTHERFORD
COUNTY**



RUTHERFORD COUNTY
board of elections



County Manager
Steve Garrison

County Commissioners

Bryan A. King, *Chairman* Alan Toney, *Vice Chairman*
Michael Benfield, Eddie Holland, Greg Lovelace

County Office

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