

# County Leaders Look Back on 2015, Forward to the Year Ahead

As 2015 comes to an end and a new year begins, county leaders are looking back on last year and forward to the one ahead.

Last year saw Joseph Jeffries elevated from interim manager to county manager and Paula Stewart transition from the county's IT director to deputy manager.

Both Jeffries and Stewart said they have enjoyed the opportunity to serve the citizens of Harnett County in their current roles and are looking forward to 2016.

Jeffries said his goal is to leave Harnett County better than he found it.

"I know that sounds cliché, but as we look into 2016, I think we should always be striving to do that," he said. "We're here to serve the citizens of Harnett County. We're also here for our employees—we are committed to making this an environment where they can grow, where they have everything they need to be successful, from benefits to administrative support."

"To make government work, it takes everybody—it's a team effort," said Stewart. "We want every employee to know that we value them and that we're constantly striving to put policies in place that will make their careers here the best they can be."

In the coming year, she said, the focus will be on looking at the county's existing staffing and facilities and maximizing what is already in place.



"We want to give people the chance to advance," she said. "We want them to make a career here, to come here and stay."

"I'm excited about Harnett County's future," said Jeffries. "I'm excited about the opportunities and the possibilities of the year ahead, and working to make this the best place it can be."

## Legal Services

Harnett County Legal Services made it through a year where the department downsized from two staff attorneys to one and saw a complete staff turnover.

Staff Attorney Monica Jackson said she is excited for 2016 as the department settles in and improves both institutional knowledge and efficiency.

## Engineering & Facilities

In 2015, Public Buildings completely transformed the former Board of Elections office on 8th Street to become the new home of Harnett County Veterans Services. The department also completed the parking lot behind Health and Social Services to host Harnett County Relay for Life.

Solid Waste saw the repair of a landfill transfer station floor, the addition of a roll-off truck and the completion of a cell at the Anderson Creek Landfill.

## Clerk of Court

Harnett County's first-in-the-state Veterans Treatment Court garnered even more accolades in its second year

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of operation. The court saw 85 veterans apply to the treatment program with 52 veterans participating in 2015. To date, 15 veterans have successfully completed the program and have had no additional issues with the court system. Volunteers gave more than 11,325 hours in 2015, saving more than \$135,900.

In 2016, officials hope to increase the court's support to veterans.

### Veterans Services

It was a big year for Veterans Services, which moved into a new office on 8th Street in October, which provided room to expand services, as well as a sense of pride for veterans. The office also held the largest Veterans Day Ceremony ever, which saw a Vietnam veteran's remains returned to Harnett County and included a ceremony, parade and memorial service.

### Emergency Services

The end of 2015 saw the departure of longtime Emergency Services Director Gary Pope. Fire Marshal Jimmy Riddle assumed the role of Emergency Services Director. Emergency Services also transitioned to the VIPER system.

EMS added three paramedics and a logistical officer, and purchased a wheelchair van and an ambulance. The department began first responder service in District 1, taught CPR to 1270 citizens and saw a 37 percent return of pulse in cardiac arrest patients.

The Fire Marshal's Office saw five fire departments improve their grades, helping to lower fire insurance rates for homeowners. Six departments went through 9E inspections and all passed. The office partnered with the Health Department to receive grant funding for smoke detectors and other fire prevention devices, which were distributed to the public. Twenty-four people were arrested for setting fires in the county.

Harnett County Emergency Management participated in a Harris EOC FEMA graded exercise and received evaluations for specialized teams. The office also participated in an active shooter drill at CCCC, a Fort Bragg Civil Affairs student project and the NCEM N.C. National Guard Vigilant Guard.

### Public Library

In 2015, the Harnett County Public Library went from a local library system to a statewide system with the new NC Cardinal system, which allows the library to share resources with systems from around the state. The system went from having approximately 200,000 resources to millions of items that local patrons can access.

The library also continued expanding programming, launching programs for Tweens during the Summer Reading Program and beyond; Sensory Storytime for children and adults with sensory integration issues, Autism spectrum disorder or other developmental issues; basic computer classes and other programs for adults. Additionally, the library brought back the "Let's Talk About It" discussion series sponsored by the NC Humanities Council and NC Center for the Book, and held several Entrepreneurship Meet-up events to link small businesses, services providers and interested people in the community.

### General Services

A number of important projects were completed at Harnett Regional Jetport including runway construction projects, shelter construction, terminal upgrades and fuel tank rehabilitation. The Jetport also successfully hosted the 2nd annual Wings Over Harnett Fly-In in October. Plans are already underway for the third annual fly-in.

In 2016, the Jetport will add attractive signage on U.S. 421 to make more

residents aware of the airport's presence and impact on Harnett County.

Animal Services implemented and participated in numerous programs including a spay and neuter voucher program with local veterinarians, a volunteer program, a veteran adoption program and the SOAR (Students of Animal Responsibility) program. Animal Services partnered with organizations like Harnett County Schools, Campbell University Public Health and Harnett Animal Welfare Coalition (HAWC).

In the area of Transportation, the Board of Commissioners approved pay increases for HARTS drivers along with 10 full-time driver positions.

General Services, through Community Development, rehabilitated four homes through the Scattered Site Housing Program and two homes through Single Family Rehabilitation.

General Services also admitted 78 youth through Youth Services with 62 successfully leaving the program.

### Information Technology

In 2015, Ira Hall took over as the county's IT Director after Paula Stewart moved to the County Manager's Office.

Last year, IT assisted several departments in implementing new software systems and devices. IT helped Child Protective Services upgrade their software and add 40 iPads for field use, assisted the Tax Office with a major update to its collection software, and added Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) software and hardware the Sheriff's Office. IT also helped Finance simplify payroll processing and helped all departments transition to ExecuTime for electronic time keeping.

Outside of county departments, IT became the "cloud hosted provider" for the towns of Angier and Lillington, providing all infrastructure, voice and servers from county systems.

## McFadden Chosen as LGFCU Fellow

Assistant Harnett County IT Director Lisa McFadden was selected to participate in the Leading for Results program as a Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) Fellow. The program, which is provided by the UNC School of

Government, is a training initiative that provides public executives with skills to build the pool of local government talent prepared for leadership succession. As a n LGFCU Fellow, McFadden will attend the program tuition-free.



# Department Spotlight

## Harnett County Solid Waste

Solid Waste is one of those departments you may not think about often, but you're sure glad it's there when you need it.

"Solid Waste touches everyone," said County Engineer Amanda Bader, who oversees Harnett County Solid Waste as part of Engineering & Facility Services.

"When people put something in the dumpster, they're done with it, but there's an important process that follows after that," Bader said. "It's incredibly important for public health to pay attention to Solid Waste."

Harnett County Solid Waste, under the direction of Operations Manager Randy Smith, manages day-to-day operations of the county's two landfills — the Dunn-Erwin Landfill on Daniels Road and the Anderson Creek Landfill on Poplar Drive. Both landfills also serve as transfer stations and recycling centers.

In addition to the landfills, the county has four convenience sites at locations including Johnsonville, Bunnlevel, Mamers and Northwest Harnett.

In recent years, as residents have become more conscious of recycling, in part due to North Carolina's ban on throwing plastic bottles in the trash, convenience centers have become more popular. As a result, Bader said, her staff are looking at locating additional sites in the county to make recycling even more convenient for residents.

Even with the added focus on recycling, Bader said Harnett County still lags behind nearly every other county in North Carolina when it comes to recycling.

She said it's important to educate residents about recycling.

"Many people don't know what is and what isn't recyclable," she said.

For instance, grocery bags are not recyclable, so when people put recyclables in grocery bags and throw them into the recycling bin, that contaminates the recyclables and a load may be refused. Instead, grocery bags may be returned to the grocery store to be disposed of.

Residents can view a list of recyclable materials on the Harnett County

Solid Waste website, or by calling Harnett County Solid Waste at (910) 814-6156.

Bader said people used to get paid for recycling certain items, but that often isn't the case anymore. One item people can still receive money for recycling is cardboard.

Harnett County Solid Waste has a cardboard baler, which can take cardboard from county departments and bale them into blocks to be recycled. Bader said the county is looking into the possibility of selling the baled cardboard. She is also looking into the possibility of recycling cardboard for non-profit agencies in the county.

Bader encouraged departments to save their cardboard and call Engineering & Facility Services for a pickup, or use FacilityDude to place a work order.

While traffic at Harnett County's landfills and convenience sites is steady throughout the year, Bader said Solid Waste just finished its busiest time of the year.

"Christmas is always huge with people getting rid of packaging from holiday gifts," she said.

She said one of Harnett County Solid Waste's priorities is doing as much as they can in-house to try and save taxpayers money.

At the Anderson Creek Landfill, employees are moving dirt to construct a new cell that will last the county another five years. Employees are also working to expand the Dunn-Erwin Landfill.

Solid Waste is also partnering with Harnett County Parks & Recreation in pursuing a grant to co-locate a convenience site with a recreation facility at the Ponderosa site.

"We're trying a different approach," said Bader.

She said Solid Waste is currently looking at making hauling loads more efficient by compacting them first.

"We're always looking not at what works and what doesn't work, but at



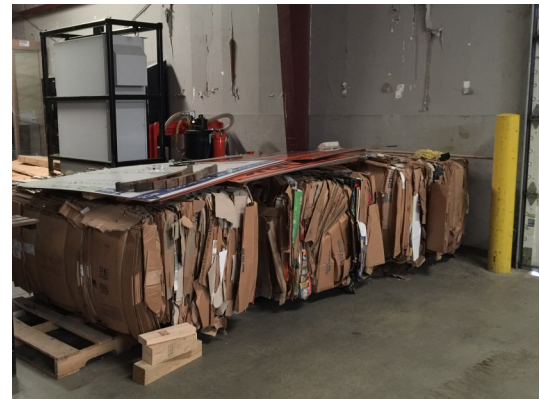
Employees with Harnett County Solid Waste work at the Anderson Creek Landfill where they the department is constructing a new cell that will last the county five more years.



what already works and what may work better," she said.

She said the county's contract with Republic Service will expire next year, which provides staff with an opportunity to look at how to improve services. Possible options may include issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or looking at bringing additional services in-house.

For more information about Harnett County Solid Waste, along with addresses for both landfills and all convenience sites, along with days and hours of operation, go to [www.harnett.org/waste/](http://www.harnett.org/waste/).



At left, Harnett County Solid Waste has a cardboard baler, which allows the department to bale cardboard for easier disposal.

## JobLink Employees Receive Recognition

Two Harnett County JobLink employees were recognized during last month's Triangle South Workforce Development Board annual banquet. April Gale, left, received the 2015 Outstanding Adult and Dislocated Worker Case Manager Award in recognition for her contribution and dedicated service to program participants in Harnett County. Anitra Hart received a certificate of recognition for her service and commitment to youth under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).



## Annual Holiday Craft Fair Held in Commons



Harnett County employees and residents from around the county flocked to Lillington for the 4th Annual Family Caregiver Holiday Craft Fair, which was held Dec. 4 in the Harnett County Government Complex Commons. The craft fair allowed guests to get a jump on their Christmas shopping lists as local artists and entrepreneurs set up around the commons, selling a wide variety of items including candles, skin care products, baked goods, clothing, cosmetics, fragrances, jewelry, scarves, knit items, homemade wreaths and Christmas decorations, garden ornaments, hand painted signs and more. The craft fair is held each year by the Harnett County Caregiver Support Program.



## Library Wins Christmas Decorating Contest

The Harnett County Public Library in Lillington won first place in the Lillington Chamber of Commerce Christmas Window Decorating Contest during Lillington's Christmas events last month. The contest is held each year to encourage businesses in Lillington to decorate their windows to support the theme for the town's Christmas events. This year's theme was "Christmas on the Silver Screen." The Library's entry was *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. From left in front of the Library are Angela McCauley, Tracey Bagnato, Michelle Wester and Patrick Fitzgerald. Not pictured is Kim VanBeck.



## Grandparents in Need Get Help for Christmas



Michael DeLucia, an assistant coach with the Campbell University baseball team, helps Richard Gregor load toys into his car following the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Christmas party.

The Harnett County Division on Aging partnered with Crossroads Church in Lillington to host a Christmas party for seniors in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program. Church members sponsored children in the county who are being raised by their grandparents and purchased Christmas presents along with household supplies and nonperishable food for the families.

Church members Elaini Arevalo and Lindsey Haire organized the event. The church's youth group also helped along with the Campbell University baseball team staff.

Randall Griffin of Erwin is currently raising four grandchildren and says the holidays are especially hectic.

"You don't have time to go out and do much, so this is a very nice addition to the holidays," he said. "I'm thankful, for sure."

Griffin said he's been with Grandparents Raising Grandchildren for four years and he appreciates the camaraderie and fellowship as well as the assistance the program provides.

Michael DeLucia, an assistant coach with the Campbell baseball team, said it's awesome to be able to do something for others during the Christmas season.

"I'm from Florida and my family's not around, so to be able to help out other families, it's really special," he said.

Arevalo said she and the church are more than happy to help and that they receive as much as they give.

"It means we are being the hands and feet of Christ and doing what He calls us to do," she said.

Latorius Adams, who runs the Division on Aging's Family Caregiver Program, said the donation was one of the largest the organization has ever received.



## Harnett Students Sing Carols at DSS



Students from Lillington-Shawtown Elementary School treated Harnett County employees to Christmas carols last month when they came to the Harnett County Government Complex and sang around the Christmas tree inside the Harnett County Department of Social Services.

## Gary Pope Awarded Long Leaf Pine



Harnett County Emergency Services Director Gary Pope was honored by the Harnett County Board of Commissioners upon his retirement at the end of December. Pope was awarded the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, North Carolina's highest civilian honor. The award was just one of many Pope received. He was also presented with a retirement banquet in his honor in the Commons area.

## Upcoming Events

- The next Lillington Community Blood Drive will be held Thursday, Jan. 14 from 1 to 5:30 p.m. in the Harnett County Government Complex Commons. The blood drive, which is sponsored by Harnett County Public Health and Harnett County RSVP, is open to the public and all donors will receive chili or soup. To schedule your lifesaving appointment, call (910) 893-7578.
- In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Harnett County RSVP will collect cans of soup to help feed the hungry in Harnett County on Monday, Jan. 18 from 10 a.m. until noon at the Harnett County Division on Aging at 309 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd., Lillington. To volunteer or for more information, contact LeAnn Blackmon at (910) 814-6071.
- Harnett County Parks and Recreation will host a Couch to 5k program for beginners who would like to run a 5k. Classes will be Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. at Barbecue Creek Park from March 7 through April 22. Registration is \$10 and includes a T-shirt. To register or for more information, call (910) 893-7518.

*If you know of any important events for February or future months that should be included in this newsletter, email [bhaney@harnett.org](mailto:bhaney@harnett.org).*

## Human Resources Corner

# Credit Reports: Get Something for Nothing

If you could get something important for free, why wouldn't you? So what's stopping you from getting a free copy of your credit report?

Each year, you're allowed to obtain a free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit-reporting agencies — Experian, Equifax and TransUnion. Checking each report at different times of the year allows you to

better watch your credit for fraud and ensure that your information is accurate.

### Why your credit history matters

Your credit report is important because it's used to evaluate your applications for credit, employment, insurance and housing rentals. In addition, your credit history and score could impact the rates you pay on loans and even

your job prospects.

You can access free copies of your reports online at:

[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

[www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)

*The advice provided is for informational purposes only. Contact a financial advisor for additional guidance.*

## Take the LGFCU 52-week Challenge

The arrival of a new year is a great time to form new habits. You can use the first of the year to kick off a new savings plan.

Sometimes it can be difficult to start saving money. You might not know how much you need to save each month, or feel you cannot work it into your budget. Saving money can be easy

and even fun with the Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) 52-week challenge. You start small and gradually put a little more in your account every week for 52 weeks—a full year.

During Week 1, put \$1 into a savings account. On the second week, put in \$2, on the third, \$3...and so on for 52

weeks, increasing the amount by a dollar a week. The largest amount you ever have to put into your savings account at one time is \$52, and by the end of the year, you will have saved \$1,378, plus interest!

Go to [www.lgfcu.org/news/take-the-52-week-money-challenge](http://www.lgfcu.org/news/take-the-52-week-money-challenge) to download a form to keep track of your progress.

## Employees' 2 Percent COLA Effective Jan. 1

During the 2015-16 budgeting process, the Harnett County Board of Commissioners approved a two-percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) for county employees.

The COLA, which was requested by

Administration, was approved to go into effect on Jan. 1, 2016.

This means employees should see a difference in their January paycheck.

The full effect of the COLA, however, won't be evident until the February

paycheck because the payroll period for January began Dec. 16, 2015, before the COLA went into effect, and ended Jan. 15, 2016. The paycheck at the end of February will be the first that includes the COLA for a full month.

## Employment Anniversaries

The following Harnett County employees celebrate employment anniversaries this month:

5 years Rhonda Wade (Animal Services)  
Michael Crisp (Sheriff's Office)  
Walter Eason (Sheriff's Office)  
Amanda Dunn (Social Services)  
Misty Wilson (Social Services)

10 years Leonard Hendges (Emergency Services)  
James Wester (EMS)

15 years

Pamela Goodman Amerson (Transport.)  
Angela McNeill (Register of Deeds)  
Victoria Payseur (Public Utilities)  
Shakeisha Campbell (Health)  
Daniel Jackson (IT)  
Steven Sorsch (Social Services)  
Angela Whittington (Social Services)

# January Employee Birthdays

The following Harnett County employees and board members celebrate birthdays in January. Please join us in wishing these employees a happy birthday.

|        |                                       |    |                                     |
|--------|---------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|
| Jan. 1 | Terry Manahan (Social Services)       |    | Joseph Coupee (Sheriff's Office)    |
|        | Jamie Cureton (Social Services)       | 18 | Scot Camden (EMS)                   |
|        | Cathy Williams (Tax)                  |    | Stephanie Jordan (EMS)              |
| 2      | Myra Laster (Social Services)         |    | Vickie Hicks (Health)               |
| 3      | Lewis Womack (EMS)                    |    | Marcus Allen (Sheriff's Office)     |
|        | Tony Allen Jr. (Public Utilities)     | 19 | James Wester (EMS)                  |
|        | Gloria Bradley (Transportation)       |    | Tina Blackmon (Health)              |
| 4      | Kimberly Lee (Health)                 |    | Lisa McFadden (IT)                  |
|        | Gordon Clapp (Health)                 | 20 | Amber Kozik (Sheriff's Office)      |
| 5      | David Dowdy (Public Utilities)        | 21 | Jamie Hargis (Public Utilities)     |
|        | Jerry Bomhan (Sheriff's Office)       | 22 | Zachary Shean (EMS)                 |
| 6      | Patricia Chalmers (Health)            |    | Amy Johnson (Jail)                  |
|        | Warren Jeffries (Sheriff's Office)    |    | Paul Phillips (Sheriff's Office)    |
| 7      | Ingrid Richardson (Coop. Extension)   |    | Wendy Butcher (Social Services)     |
|        | David Jimenez (EMS)                   |    | Laura Byrd (Social Services)        |
|        | Taylor Ray (Public Utilities)         |    | James Haney (Solid Waste)           |
|        | Jamie Hwang (Sheriff's Office)        |    | James Warren (Transportation)       |
|        | Katrina Blue (Social Services)        |    | Tori Humphries (Transportation)     |
|        | Frederick Devoe (Transportation)      | 23 | Karen Moore (GIS)                   |
| 8      | Jesse Neighbors (Sheriff's Office)    |    | Jay Smith (Planning)                |
|        | Jillian Leslie (Social Services)      |    | Moriah Green (Restitution)          |
| 9      | Mary Elskamp (EMS)                    |    | Susanna Macias (Social Services)    |
|        | Vivian Blocker (Social Services)      |    | Tracey Davis (Social Services)      |
| 10     | Rose Lee (Social Services)            | 24 | Jennifer Westbrook (EMS)            |
|        | Kriston Stone (Social Services)       |    | Thaddaeus Evans (Joblink)           |
| 12     | Peter Cipriano (Sheriff's Office)     | 25 | Leslie Owens (EMS)                  |
|        | Thakida McDougald (Social Services)   |    | Lasheika Blue (Social Services)     |
| 13     | Princess Davis (Social Services)      | 26 | Ruth Burgun (Social Services)       |
|        | Phyllis Edens (Social Services)       | 27 | Marva Walden (Health)               |
| 14     | Richard Canino (EMS)                  |    | Daphne Tyler (Social Services)      |
|        | William Wade (Sheriff's Office)       | 28 | Wesley Jacobs (EMS)                 |
| 15     | Shelia Sudia (Finance)                |    | Lacey McLean (EMS)                  |
|        | Thomas Cummings (Public Utilities)    |    | Samuel Massa (EMS)                  |
|        | Ashley Howard (Social Services)       |    | Kiki Turner (Social Services)       |
|        | Milton Howard (Solid Waste)           | 29 | Brenda Stancil (EMS)                |
|        | Anitra Hart (Joblink)                 |    | Carolyn Murayama (Public Utilities) |
| 16     | Morgan Wood (Sheriff's Office)        |    | Lorie Babb (Register of Deeds)      |
|        | Randolph Clegg (Public Utilities)     | 30 | Gina Wheeler (Administration)       |
|        | Copelia Madzivanyika (Transportation) | 31 | Lenora Dawson (Sheriff's Office)    |
| 17     | Katy Perez (Human Resources)          |    |                                     |

Want to know about events taking place in Harnett County each month? Check out the Harnett County Community Calendar at [www.harnett.org/publicinfo](http://www.harnett.org/publicinfo). And if you know of an event that should be on the calendar and isn't, email information to [bhaney@harnett.org](mailto:bhaney@harnett.org).



# Employees Get Service Awards at Luncheon



Last month, during Harnett County's annual Employee Holiday Luncheon, county employees who hit milestone employment anniversaries were recognized for their service. Barbara Ross (Health Department) celebrated 30 years with Harnett County. Employees celebrating 25 years with Harnett County include: Cherie Shaw (Public Utilities), William Grady (Sheriff's Office), Paul Polinski (Social Services), Lisa Hinson (Social Services), Virginia Smith (Social Services), Debra Taylor (Social Services), and Cathy Williams (Tax Department). Employees celebrating 20 years with Harnett County include: Andrew Holland (Solid Waste), Pam Hawley (Health Department), Glenn McFadden (Public Utilities), Melissa Page (Public Utilities), Ronald Lackey (Sheriff's Office), Darleen Miller (Sheriff's Office), Joseph Webb (Sheriff's Office), Donald Horan (Social Services), Britta Nipper (Social Services), Theresa Zimmer (Social Services), and William Beasley (Tax Department).



County officials also recognized those employees who retired in 2015 during the annual Employee Holiday Luncheon. Those employees include: Gary Pope (Emergency Services), Pam Hawley (Health Department), Jo Anne Williams (Division on Aging), Allie Bryant (Public Buildings), Susan McCray (Public Utilities), Dean Hewitt (Sheriff's Office), Danny Jackson (Sheriff's Office), Charles Peele (Sheriff's Office), Hal Stroud (Sheriff's Office), William Barefoot (Sheriff's Office), Charles McNeill (Sheriff's Office), and Georgianna Lander (Social Services).





Harnett County Commissioners and Administration officials join officials from Wake County for a photo in front of the Harris Nuclear Plant cooling tower following a tour of the nuclear plant last month.

## Commissioners Tour Harris Nuclear Plant

Last month, Harnett County Commissioners joined Administration officials and members of the Wake County Board of Commissioners for a tour of Harris Nuclear Plant, located just outside of Harnett County.

Duke Energy, which operates the Harris Plant, hosted the tour and welcomed county officials to the facility, which uses a nuclear reactor to generate power.

Commissioners were able to tour the plant and meet many of the employees who work there.

Commissioners Chairman Jim Burgin said he was impressed by what he saw.

“To see the quality of the young engineers who led our tours and the people they have working there, as well as the security measures they have in place and just the whole operation of the facility was impressive,” he said.

Vice Chairman Gordon Springle said he too walked away with a renewed appreciation of what’s taking place just across Harnett County’s border in neighboring Wake County.

“I feel a lot better about what they’re doing there and how they’re operating the plant,” he said. “I was very impressed with what I saw.”

Commissioner Barbara McKoy said the tour was a unique experience and she appreciated being able to attend. She said she was impressed, not only by the tour itself, but by the Duke employees who led the tour.

“It was quite interesting,” she said. “It makes me feel safer just seeing some of the top-notch security they have in place there.”