

## Harnett County's Literary Giant

### PAUL ELIOT GREEN 1894-1981

*Birthplace of the dramatist, novelist, teacher and humanitarian is situated 2.1 miles north. Awarded Pulitzer Prize 1927. Originator of the Symphonic Drama, of which he wrote 16, including "The Lost Colony". Lifelong champion of racial equality, and implacable foe of militarism and capital punishment. Was North Carolina's Dramatist Laureate.*

The above note is inscribed on an historical marker on U.S. 421 in Buies Creek, just west of Campbell University's campus. It was put there to honor one of Harnett County's most well-known sons.

Paul Eliot Green was born on March 17, 1894, in Buies Creek.

Green was best known for his depictions of life in North Carolina, which he experienced first-hand, growing up on a cotton farm in rural Harnett County. It was there he also learned the value of hard work and the beauty of literature and music. He read books while he worked in the field and taught himself to play the violin.

Green graduated from Buies Creek Academy (today known as Campbell University) in 1914 and taught school and played semi-professional baseball to earn enough money to attend the University of North Carolina.

Marsha Warren, executive director of the Paul Green Foundation, described Green as a "country boy and a



**Harnett County native Paul Green**

serious baseball player — he could have been in the Major League."

She said when he was 10 years old, he fell out of a tree and hurt his arm. An infection set in he was sent to Johns Hopkins. He was a pitcher and had to learn how to pitch with his left arm, which he did.

In 1916, he went to Chapel Hill at age 22 to attend the University of North Carolina, but his education there was cut short by World War I. Green signed up for the war and served as an officer in the trenches in France.

According to Warren, Green self-published a book of poems before he left for the war because he wanted people to know he was a poet in case he didn't make it home.

After the war, he returned to the University of North Carolina and was a key figure in the early days of the Carolina Playmakers. It was there he befriended fellow North Carolina author Thomas Wolfe and Elizabeth Lay, whom he would later marry. Green taught philosophy and drama at UNC-Chapel Hill until he retired in 1994.

Green was a prolific writer with dozens of plays and dramatic productions along with numerous film scripts, essays and books. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1927 for his full-length Broadway play, *In Abraham's Bosom*.

He is also credited with developing a new dramatic form, the symphonic drama, which is a particular form of historical play, usually set on the site depicted in the action, and embodying music, dance, pantomime and poetic dialogue. His first and most famous was "The Lost Colony," which told the story of Sir Walter Raleigh's doomed colony on Roanoke Island and has been staged in Manteo, N.C., every year since it was first performed in 1937, except during World War II.

Much of Green's writing dealt with the harsh reality of the American South. He was an outspoken advocate for ra-

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cial equality and positive race relations, and was against the death penalty.

Paul Green died on May 4, 1981 at age 87. The year after his death, his colleagues and family formed the Paul Green Foundation to foster his principles in the areas of creative writing, human rights and international amity through a series of grants and awards.

In addition to his Pulitzer Prize, Green received two Guggenheim Fellowships, the National Theatre Conference Award, and nine honorary degrees. He was one of the founders of the North Carolina Symphony and the Institute of Outdoor Theatre. He was also honored posthumously with induction into the Theatre Hall of Fame in New York in 1993, and the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame in 1996.

The Paul Green Theatre in Chapel Hill is also named after the Harnett County writer. The 500-seat facility is located in the Center for Dramatic Art on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus, and features a bust of Green displayed prominently in the lobby.

**Paul Green Festival**

In April 2012, a group of volunteers came together to put on a two-day festival honoring Paul Green in Harnett County. The group included members of the Green family and representatives from Harnett County, Friends of the Harnett County Library, Campbell University and the Paul Green Foundation, among others.

The Paul Green Festival featured an evening of music and dinner at the old Lillington High School, scholarly readings at Campbell University, play performances, a lunch with characters in costume from "The Lost Colony," an artifact exhibit at the Campbell University Library, and a county-wide reading of Green's novel, *This Body, The Earth*. There was also a baseball tournament and an ice cream social, each celebrating things Green loved.

Plans are currently underway to host another Paul Green Festival in Harnett County in Spring 2017.

For more information on Paul

Green, go to the Paul Green Foundation website at [www.paulgreen.org/](http://www.paulgreen.org/).



Photos from Paul Green's life including, at top left, Green at one of his 17 outdoor dramas in 1955, top right, a portrait of Green by Lance Richardson, above, the Green family home in Harnett County, and left, Green with the novelist Richard Wright at UNC circa 1940. Photos courtesy of the Paul Green Foundation.

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).



# Department Spotlight

## Harnett County Board of Elections

Harnett County Board of Elections Director Claire Jones believes voting is extremely important. A section on the Board of Elections website shows that one vote really can make a difference, noting a number of times in history where one vote shaped the trajectory of the United States.

"Every vote counts," said Jones. "If you want your voice to be heard, you have to go out and vote."

Jones began working for the Harnett County Board of Elections as a temporary employee in 2002. She was made full-time in 2005 and was hired as the county's elections director in 2013. She sees her job as maintaining the integrity of Harnett County's elections so that they are fair to all citizens of the county.

There are nearly 69,000 registered voters in Harnett County.

The Board of Elections' primary responsibility is conducting all elections in Harnett County from presidential and midterm elections to primary and runoff elections, as well as municipal elections for the county's five municipalities.

The board is also charged with registering new voters, something that inevitably picks up in a presidential election year like this one, as does voter turnout.

"Turnout is definitely different depending on the year," said Jones. "You don't get as many voters for municipal elections, off-year elections or second primaries" as you do for presidential elections.

Even with lower voter turnout, however, she said municipal elections can be just as contentious, if not more so, than national races. Part of the reason, she said, is that local elections are closer to the people.

The Harnett County Board of Elections, like all others in the state, is governed by a three-member board. Members are allotted by whichever party holds the Governor's Mansion with the governor's party having two members and the other party having one. Because Gov. Pat McCrory is a Republican, the board currently has two Republicans (Chairman Jim Currin and Joey Powell) and one Democrat (Tony Spears).

Local political parties make nominations to the state party, which passes the nominations on to the State Board of Elections. Board members are appointed in June of years that end in an odd number and take office on July 1.

Regardless of which party controls the Board of Elections, the board's goal is the same – to "conduct honest, fair and impartial elections."

From the outside, it might seem like there would be a lot of downtime at the Board of Elections between elections, but nothing could be further from the truth.

"By the time we've finished with one election, it's time to start preparing for the next one," said Jones.

As soon as last year's municipal elections wrapped up last November, staff began looking forward to the March 15, 2016, primary election. Filing for the primary began in December. In January, employees underwent training in preparation for the March 15 election. Absentee ballots became available near the end of January. Early voting began on March 3.

Following the March 15 primary, results will be made official during the canvas on March 22. Filing will kick off on March 16 — just one day after the election — for the June 7 primary election for candidates running for U.S. House of Representatives. From there, the process starts all over again.

One of the most important functions of the Board of Elections outside of running elections and registering voters is keeping up with election law changes and educating the public on those changes. Jones said this is the most challenging part of the job.

The North Carolina General Assembly made a number of changes to elections in the last several years. Some of those changes have been challenged in the courts, and it's the Board of Elections' job to stay on top of what changes are in effect and what aren't. Voters will be required to show a photo ID to



Harnett County Board of Elections Director Claire Jones tests a voting machine prior to the March 15 primary election.

vote in this year's election, however people can still register to vote during one-stop early voting and if a voter shows up to vote at the wrong polling location, they will be allowed to cast a provision ballot, which will count for the offices that apply to their correct polling place.

"Our job is not to take a position on the law – it's to enforce the law and to educate the public on new laws," said Jones.

Another constant activity for the Board of Elections is making sure voter rolls are up-to-date, adding newly registered voters and removing voters who are deceased or cannot currently vote due to a felony conviction. The board receives a monthly report from the State Board of Elections as well as death certificates from the Register of Deeds office. They also receive registration applications from the DMV, Social Ser-

vices and the Employment Security Commission.

"List maintenance is a year-long process," said Jones.

Registered voters can become inactive if mail from the Board of Elections is returned as undeliverable. If a voter remains inactive for two federal elections, they are removed from the voter rolls and must register again.

The Board of Elections is also responsible for recruiting and training poll workers to work during early voting and on Election Day.

"We're always recruiting poll workers," said Jones, adding that poll workers do get paid for their service.

In nearly a decade and a half with the Board of Elections, Jones said she's seen the office go through numerous improvements. Today, poll workers enter voter names into computers and print voter forms when they come to the

polls. In the past, they entered voters into the poll books by hand and peeled off stickers with the voter's information.

"It's a lot more accurate now," said Jones.

As for future developments, she thinks the ability to register to vote online may be just around the corner.

One thing she doesn't think will ever go away is the paper ballot.

"Voters just really like them," she said.

Registered voters can go to [https://enr.ncsbe.gov/voter\\_search\\_public/](https://enr.ncsbe.gov/voter_search_public/) and type in their information to look up their public voter information, which includes their party affiliation, jurisdictions, polling place, voter history and sample ballots.

For more information on elections in Harnett County, go to [www.harnett.org/elections](http://www.harnett.org/elections).

## Harnett County Public Library Hosting Program Focused on Sports in North Carolina

The Harnett County Public Library will host a presentation called "It's Not Just a Game: Sports and Society in North Carolina."

Alex Macaulay (Ph.D., University of Georgia), will lead the "Roads Scholar" speaker presentation, which is being hosted through a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council.

The presentation will take place in the Library's Meeting Room on Tuesday, March 22 at 6 p.m. The program is free and open to the public; however, registration is required by calling the library at (910) 893-3446.

With its reputation as a "basketball state with a football problem," sports remain a prominent aspect of life in the Tar Heel state. Generations of participants, spectators, fans and critics have debated its importance, and while some have found the state's fascination with sports beneficial and admirable, others have deemed it wasteful and distracting.

A closer look at which events and athletes various North Carolinians have embraced and/or rejected reveals a great deal about the way people have viewed themselves and their region. As such, this program will examine what sports and the men and women who play them have meant and continue to mean to the state, economically, culturally, politically and socially.

Macaulay is an Assistant Professor of US History at Western Carolina University. A South Carolina native, he received his MA from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and his BA from the Citadel. He is currently finishing work on a book about the post World War II history of the Citadel and is in the preliminary stages of a biography on Kris Kristofferson.

This project is made possible by a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for

the Humanities.

The Harnett County Public Library is located at 601 S. Main St., Lillington. Suggestions for program or class topics, questions about the Roads Scholar, or other adult programs, can be directed to Jennifer Taft, reference librarian at [jtaft@harnett.org](mailto:jtaft@harnett.org) or (910) 893-3446.

Other upcoming programs at the Harnett County Public Library include the Turning Pages Book Club, March 17 at 10 a.m., and an Internet Basics Computer Class on March 24 at 10 a.m. Registration is required.

On March 10, the library hosted a presentation from the North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission. Representatives from the commission spoke about the legal system, their process, and about some of the interesting cases they have worked on. The program was inspired by the success of the popular podcast "Serial" and the Netflix series "Making a Murderer."

## RSVP Volunteers Honored at Blood Drive



During a recent Lillington Community Blood Drive, the American Red Cross recognized volunteers with Harnett County Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) who serve at the blood drives, which are hosted by the Harnett County Division on Aging. From left, volunteers include Bea Coats, Barbara Sanders, Barbara Edwards and Delores Nier. During the March 10 blood drive, which coincided with American Red Cross Month, the Red Cross collected 38 units of blood, meeting the blood drive's goal. The next Lillington Community Blood Drive will be held May 12. To make an appointment, contact RSVP Director LeAnn Blackmon at (910) 893-7478. Walk-in donors are also welcome.

## *Planning Department Rebrands to Become Harnett County Development Services*

Harnett County Planning Services has been rebranded to better represent to the public what the department does. The department is now Harnett County Development Services and has renamed several positions to reflect the change.

"We believe these changes will provide the citizens of Harnett County with a better understanding of the services we offer," said Harnett County Director of Development Services Mark Locklear.

The department's former name caused some confusion with citizens who thought it only dealt with Planning and Zoning. In fact, Development Services includes Planning, Inspections and Central Permitting.

Locklear said the change also signals an effort to make developing in Harnett County easier with the addition of a posi-

tion solely dedicated to guiding residents through the commercial and multi-family development process.

When someone begins the development process, they will be assigned to Project Coordinator Donna Johnson, who will walk them through the process, finding answers to any questions they may have and directing them to the right people to assist them in development.

Manager of Planning Services Jay Sikes said the new brand reflects a current trend in the field.

"The development process can seem daunting for someone who's not used to it," he said. "We can help with all sorts of development – this is where it starts."

For more information on Development Services, go to [www.harnett.org/planning](http://www.harnett.org/planning).

## Upcoming Events

- The Harnett County Girls Are Great Conference will be held Saturday, April 9 from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. at Harnett Central Middle School at 2529 Harnett Central Road, Angier. The program is for girls ages 9 to 16 and their mothers or adult female guardians, and will include exhibits, health screenings, fun workshops and more. The cost is \$7 per person and includes a light breakfast and lunch. To register, go to <https://gsnccp.wufoo.com/forms/event-registration-girls-are-great/>. For more information, contact the Harnett County Health Department at (910) 893-7550 or contact the Harnett County Cooperative Extension at (910) 893-7534.
- Harnett County Relay for Life will be held Friday, April 29 in the Harnett County Governmental Complex Parking lot behind the Health Department and Social Services. The opening ceremony will begin at 6 p.m. To sign up, donate or for more information, go to [http://main.acevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY16SA?pg=entry&fr\\_id=70972](http://main.acevents.org/site/TR/RelayForLife/RFLCY16SA?pg=entry&fr_id=70972).

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



## Human Resources Corner

# Spend Tax Refunds Wisely

According to the IRS, the average tax refund received in 2014 was almost \$3,000. Thinking of buying a new Super-HDTV or taking a weeklong vacation with your refund this year? Consider what else you could do with your money.

**Treat yourself** — Don't overdo it, but putting 10 percent toward something just for you should make for a nice treat. It may also help curb the desire to make a larger impulse purchase.

**Establish an I-got-your-back fund** — Try to have at least three to six months of living expenses on hand for unexpected situations, like a job layoff or health problem. Put this money in a Money Market Account, which typically carries a higher dividend than a savings account. Resist the temptation to

spend by skipping the ATM card.

**Invest in your home** — Increase your home's value with a new roof or bathroom upgrade. Could new energy-efficient appliances help reduce your monthly utility bills? A small investment now could pay off big later.

**Make an extra payment on your mortgage** — Paying off your mortgage may not be as attractive as that new Super-HDTV, but the unattractive options are sometimes the ones that make the most sense. Think about the interest you'd pay over the life of the mortgage. In some cases, it may be nearly as much as the principal. By adding an extra payment, you could reduce the interest that you would likely pay.

**Pay off credit cards** — Since this is

possibly the debt with the highest interest rate, start here. If you can knock down — or knock out — this debt, think of all the money you'll save in interest alone.

**Fund your retirement** — Did you know that if you make a one-time deposit of \$2,000 and invest it in an IRA comprised of stocks that earn 11 percent (the historical stock market average), it could grow to \$53,416 in 30 years? Put in \$2,000 every year for 30 years and you may be looking at \$495,736!

Try one or more of these tips to make your refund go further this year.

*The advice provided is for information purposes only. Consult your financial advisor or tax consultant for additional guidance.*

## Household Hazardous Waste Event is March 19

Harnett County Solid Waste will host a one-day Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Saturday, March 19 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. This event will be held at the Harnett County Engineering & Facilities Maintenance Warehouse at 200 Alexander Drive, Lillington.

In addition to household hazardous waste, agricultural pesticides and herbicides will also be collected. Other items

that will be collected include: automotive products, fertilizers, oil-based paints, solvents and cleaners, items containing mercury (including fluorescent bulbs), electronics and batteries.

Latex paint will also be accepted, though latex paint is non-hazardous and may be disposed of in a normal trash can as long as it is dried and hardened. Cat litter can be used to harden latex paint.

This event is hosted in cooperation with the Harnett County Cooperative Extension and North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program.

For more information on the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event and other services, contact Harnett County Solid Waste at (910) 814-6156 or go to [www.harnett.org/waste/](http://www.harnett.org/waste/).

## County Offers Service to Notify Residents During Emergency

Did you know you can register your phone number with Harnett County Emergency Services to be notified in the event of an emergency?

Go to <http://harnett.org/downloads/rapidnotify.asp> to register for Harnett

County's Rapid Notify Citizen Emergency Telephone Notification System.

During an emergency, Amber Alert, Silver Alert or any other event where the county needs to quickly get information out to the public, the system is

used to notify residents. You may register cell phones as well as traditional home phones.

Contact Harnett County Emergency Services at (910) 893-7580 for more information.

## March Employee Birthdays

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

Mar. 1	Scott Tripp (Development Services)		Kerri Davis (Health)
	Clarence Gibson (Public Utilities)		Benjamin Bursey (Restitution)
	Ainsley Johnson (Health)		John Knight (Sheriff's Office)
	Kimberly Vanbeck (Library)		Rodney Jackson (Sheriff's Office)
	Nicole Kirk (Social Services)		Kimberly Hathcock (Social Services)
	Terri Crisp (Social Services)	16	Daniel Fleming (EMS)
2	Jackie Helton (Cooperative Extension)		Renea Warren-Ford (Finance)
	Allan O'Briant (Public Utilities)		Deborah Wilson (Health)
3	Sharon Williams (Cooperative Extension)		Angela McNeill (Register of Deeds)
	Randy Baker (Development Services)	19	Marcellus Wright (Public Utilities)
	Jordan Hottel (EMS)	20	Joshua Munn (EMS)
	Jaime Phelps (Public Utilities)		Kristian Stewart (Social Services)
	Andrew Holder (Sheriff's Office)	22	Graham Byrd (Health)
	Wayne Coats (Sheriff's Office)		Kristen Sellers (Sheriff's Office)
4	Lisa Spencer (Sheriff's Office)		Charles Peele (Sheriff's Office)
	Shannon Warren (Social Services)		Robert Burlock (Sheriff's Office)
	Berna Ortiz (Social Services)	23	Bradley Stevens (Sheriff's Office)
5	Ayla Burgett (Sheriff's Office)	24	Patrick Holt (Sheriff's Office)
	Samantha Hetrick (EMS)		Joan Shaw (Parks & Recreation)
	Michael Morrison (Public Buildings)		Hal Stroud (Sheriff's Office)
7	Matthew Hendricks (EMS)	25	Elizabeth Beasley (Public Utilities)
	Johnny Hawley (Sheriff's Office)		David Oakley (Sheriff's Office)
	David Pate (Sheriff's Office)		Stewart Parker (Sheriff's Office)
	Beverly Nicholas (Social Services)	26	Amy Allen (Health)
	Lianna Simmons (Social Services)		Franklin Carson (Sheriff's Office)
8	Samantha Stanley (EMS)		Kimberly Sirois (Library)
	Donald Lucas (Sheriff's Office)	27	Tina Strickland (Finance)
	Roger Taylor (Soil & Water)	28	Debra Hardison (Sheriff's Office)
9	Jeb Shook (Public Administration)	29	Bobby Strickland (Sheriff's Office)
	Darius Purdie (Sheriff's Office)		Pamela Little (Social Services)
10	Denise McLean (Transportation)		Tyneqwa Lester (Transportation)
11	Debra Byrd (Cooperative Extension)	30	Judy Holley (Administration)
	Robert Edmonds (Public Utilities)		Kimberly Honeycutt (Finance)
	Sabrina Currin (Sheriff's Office)		Patricia Purvis (Health)
12	Walter Massey (Development Services)		Jiang Ouyang (IT)
	Robin Sawyers (EMS)		William Grady (Sheriff's Office)
	Audrey Mason (Public Utilities)	31	Michele Temple (GIS)
	David Whittenton (Sheriff's Office)		Tracy Tant (Public Utilities)
13	Lacey Segars (Legal Services)		Michael Vanderpool (Sheriff's Office)
14	Robert Norris (Sheriff's Office)		Catherine Taylor (Sheriff's Office)
15	Lee Harris (Health)		

## Employment Anniversaries

The following Harnett County employees celebrate employment anniversaries this month:

5 years	Cynthia Jackson (Social Services)	15 years	Joseph Coupee (Sheriff's Office)
10 years	Scott Lent (Sheriff's Office)		Melinda Beasley (Social Services)
	Alexander Belanovich (EMS)		

# County Holds Community Update Meeting



Harnett County took its show on the road when the county held a Community Update meeting at Benhaven Elementary School on March 3. The purpose of the informational meeting was to provide residents in western Harnett County with an update from county leaders and department heads on projects and programs in Harnett County, and to give citizens the opportunity to ask questions. Participants included Harnett County Commissioner Joe Miller, County Manager Joseph Jeffries, Deputy Manager Paula Stewart, Economic Development Director Nick Dula, Parks & Recreation Director Carl Davis, Board of Education Member Chad Smith, Public Utilities Director Steve Ward, Development Services Director Mark Locklear, Sheriff's Maj. Wayne Coats and Public Information Officer Brian Haney. Members of the panel gave brief updates on their departments and then answered questions from residents who attended the meeting. More than 100 people attended the meeting and another Community Update meeting is currently being planned in the Lillington area.

## Troop 1783 Girl Scouts Attend Board Meeting

The Harnett County Board of Commissioners hosted girl scouts from Troop 1783 in Dunn during their March 7 board meeting in Lillington. The scouts led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance and then received a proclamation designating March 6 through 12 as Girl Scout Week. Following the meeting, the scouts posed for pictures in the commissioners chairs.

