

## Memorial Day Ceremony is May 30

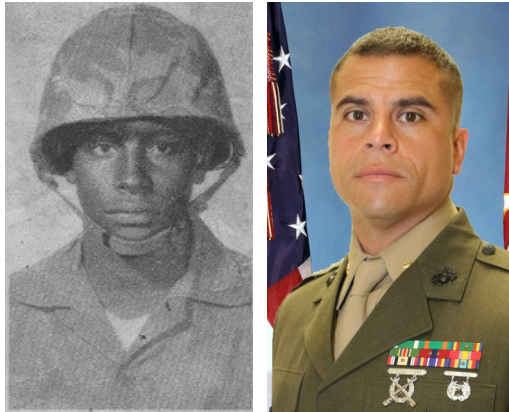
The Harnett County Veterans Council will hold its annual Memorial Day Ceremony Monday, May 30 at 9 a.m. at Veterans Memorial Park, beside the courthouse in the Harnett County Governmental Complex in Lillington.

This year's ceremony will include a medal presentation to the family of Pfc. Neal Albert Denning, a U.S. Marine from Harnett County who was killed in action on May 12, 1965, while serving in the Vietnam War. Pfc. Denning's name is already included on Harnett County's Vietnam Veterans Monument, which was unveiled last November. Pfc. Denning's sister, Pat Denning Wells, will receive her brother's medals.

Officials will also unveil the Blue Star Monument, which was donated by the Four Seasons Garden Club of Lillington as a tribute to the Armed Forces of America.

Maj. Jeremy B. Durette of the U.S. Marine Corps will be the guest speaker for the Memorial Day Ceremony, which will feature a wreath laying and the playing of Taps to memorialize area veterans.

"Memorial Day is a day when we come together to honor and remember our servicemen and women who answered America's call to service and paid the ultimate price," said Amy Noel, president of the Harnett County Veterans Council. "It's a day when our entire country should come together to stand up and say, 'Thank



**Top left is Pfc. Neal Albert Denning, a U.S. Marine who was killed in action in Vietnam and whose family will receive medals in his honor during the May 30 Memorial Day Ceremony at Veterans Park. At top left, Maj. Jeremy B. Durette will be the guest speaker at the event and the Blue Star Monument will also be added to Veterans Park.**

you. We remember you. We are grateful to you."

The Memorial Day Ceremony follows last year's Veterans Day Ceremo-

ny, which saw the remains of Staff Sgt. Donald D. Stewart of Coats brought back to Harnett County after he was killed while serving in the Vietnam War.

Noel said the public awareness surrounding Staff Sgt. Stewart's family's efforts to positively identify his remains and have them brought back to Harnett County has led to more families coming forward to ask that the County honor their relatives who served in the military.

"We're discovering more and more people whose names belong on our monuments and we're doing research to confirm their service and local ties," said Noel.

She said Harnett County Veterans Services is also preparing to complete the final phase of Veterans Memorial Park – a Memorial Walkway with pavers in honor and memory of veterans in Harnett County. Information on the cost and how to purchase pavers will be made available as the project moves forward.

Light refreshments will be served in the Harnett County Commons Area following Monday's ceremony. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be held inside the Commons Area.

For more information on the Memorial Day Ceremony or to inquire about the Veterans Memorial Walkway, contact Harnett County Veterans Services at (910) 893-7574.

Keep up with Harnett County on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and go to [www.harnett.org/publicinfo](http://www.harnett.org/publicinfo) for news releases, important updates, a community calendar and other information.



# Department Spotlight

## Harnett County Guardian ad Litem Program

Each year, more than half a million children suffer from abuse or neglect, often resulting in the need for court intervention. One program in Harnett County seeks to make a difference in the lives of children who are abused or neglected.

"Guardian ad litem" is a legal term meaning "guardian for the proceeding." Guardian ad Litem volunteers serve as a child's advocate during court proceedings over allegations of neglect or abuse.

Harnett County's Guardian ad Litem program is part of District 11, which also includes Lee and Johnston counties. Valerie Haynes currently serves as interim director for the District 11 program. The main office is located in Harnett County. Additional employees in Harnett County include Program Assistant Vivian Holmes, Volunteer Recruiter and Community Engagement Specialist Allison DeLong, and Guardian ad Litem Supervisor Moira Conlon. Other staff serve in the Johnston County satellite office and as Guardian ad Litem attorney advocates.

The Guardian ad Litem program is funded by the State of North Carolina and is part of the Administrative Office of the Courts. The program is housed in the Harnett County Courthouse.

As of March 2016, there were 130 children in the program in Harnett County. Of that number, only 82 children had a Guardian ad Litem advocate. That means 48 children or 37 percent did not have an advocate.

Haynes said more volunteers are needed to serve children who are in the program.

Guardian ad Litem volunteers must complete a 30-hour training program, half in person and half online. They also go through a mock case to expose them to what the real thing will be like. After they complete the training, volunteers are sworn-in as Guardian ad Litem volunteers and given a supervisor.

"Once you take the oath, you become an officer of the courts and there are a lot of protections in place," said Haynes.

Program officials work to match volunteers to a case that best comple-

ments the volunteer and the child based on preferences.

After they've been assigned a case, Guardian ad Litem volunteers will go out and meet the child or children involved and develop a rapport with them so the children feel comfortable.

Volunteers then gather information about the child and complete an independent child-focused report, making a recommendation on what they think is in the child's best interest, what services they need, what access is appropriate for parents or guardians and what interventions may be needed for parents and guardians.

In their unique position as officers of the court, Guardian ad Litem volunteers have access to a wealth of confidential information about their charges including school and mental health records. Unlike social workers, who are assigned more cases at a time, Guardian ad Litem volunteers are able to focus solely on an individual child or children.

While gathering confidential information and making recommendations on a child's welfare may seem daunting, Haynes stressed that the training program fully prepares volunteers to serve in the program.

"When you go through the training, we address common misconceptions and fears people have about the job," she said.

"It can be challenging, but it's also rewarding," she added. "You get to help these children during a critical time in their lives where their families have been disrupted."

Haynes said the average time commitment for volunteers is eight hours a month. She said more time is generally needed at the start of the case, during court proceedings, followed by information-gathering and monitoring.

As part of Harnett County's Personnel Ordinance, county employees are allotted a certain amount of hours with pay each month to volunteer their time



**Harnett County Guardian Ad Litem Volunteer Cindy McPhail has volunteered with the Guardian ad Litem program since 2009.**

## What's Happening in Harnett?

Are you looking for something to do over the weekend? Have you ever wanted to run your own business, but need some help getting started? Keep up with what's going on in Harnett County with the Community Calendar at [www.harnett.org/publicinfo](http://www.harnett.org/publicinfo). The calendar compiles community events taking place throughout Harnett County — from all the town festivals and parades going on in the fall to community meetings and seminars at Triangle South Enterprise Center — and puts them in a single location. It also includes events held by partner organizations including area chambers of commerce, the Dunn Area Tourism Authority, Campbell University, Central Carolina Community College and Raven Rock State Park. See something that's missing from the calendar? Let us know and we'll add it! To submit an event for inclusion in the Harnett County Community Calendar, email [bhaney@harnett.org](mailto:bhaney@harnett.org).

with nonprofits and other community organizations.

Haynes said volunteers come from many different backgrounds and education levels.

"There's no set degree you have to have," she said. "What you do need is a sincere concern for trying to improve the lives of the children you represent."

She said retired teachers make excellent Guardian ad Litem volunteers.

Lillington resident and retired educator Cindy McPhail taught school for more than 30 years and became involved in the Guardian ad Litem program in 2009 after a friend who volunteered in the program told her about it.

"I've always been interested in children," she said. "This sounded like something I felt like I could do, that there were children out there I could still help after retiring from the school system."

In seven years as a volunteer, McPhail said she has had eight cases and 15 children under her charge.

"It's very rewarding," she said, adding that it can be frustrating at times "because you're dealing with the court system."

Ultimately, she said, Guardian ad Litem volunteers are there to be a voice for children.

"I'm there to make sure their needs are met," she said. "My goal is to see what's in the best interest of the children."

She said the training was crucial in allowing her to know what to expect as a volunteer.

While she said people who have experience working with children make excellent volunteers, "there are a lot of people who can do this."

She said she's available to talk to church and civic groups about the program and would love to share her story with anyone who may be interested in volunteering.

"If a person has a concern for the well-being of children and is willing to volunteer their time, they should volunteer," she said. "It's not a lot of time — most people spend more time on Facebook or playing cards and other games, and you get a lot more out of this."

The next Harnett County Guardian ad Litem training session begins Thursday, June 9. For more information about the program, visit <http://www.nccourts.org/County/Harnett/GAL/Default.asp> or contact the Guardian ad Litem District 11 Main Office at 301 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd., Suite 1047, Lillington, or at (910) 814-4690.

## 30th Anniversary General William C. Lee Celebration is Next Month

The Dunn Area Tourism Authority will hold the 30th Anniversary General William C. Lee Celebration next month to honor Dunn's own General William C. Lee, the "Father of the Airborne." Below is a schedule of events:

Sunday, June 5, 6 p.m. — Community Sing & Worship Service at the General Lee Museum

Monday, June 6, 10 a.m. — "Wreath Laying Ceremony" at Gravesite of General Lee, Greenwood Cemetery

Wednesday, June 8, 11 a.m. — Flag Dedication Ceremony at General Lee Museum

Thursday, June 9, 7 p.m. — Gospel Sing with Butler, Hughes & Hayes, Brian Free & Assurance at Central Baptist Church

Friday, June 10 — Pig Cook-off at Tart Park

Saturday, June 11, 8 a.m. — American Legion Breakfast at Post 59

- 10:30 a.m. — Walk with a Veteran at Tyler Park
- 9 a.m. until noon — Car Show at Tart Park
- 6 p.m. — Evening in the Park at Tart Park with the Golden Knights, Band of Oz, Charlie Daniels Band and fireworks



# Area Seniors Go for the Gold in Mid-Carolina Games



Senior citizens from Harnett County and the surrounding area completed in the Mid-Carolina Senior Games, which offer senior adults age 50 and up in Harnett, Cumberland and Sampson counties the opportunity to participate in competitive events such as corn hole, at top, and running/walking, above, at locations across the region including Al Woodall Municipal Park in Erwin and Campbell University. Competitors who won medals in the Mid-Carolina Senior Games qualified for the North Carolina Senior Games State Finals, which are held in the fall in Raleigh. The Mid-Carolina games provide health promotion and wellness programs for adults age 50 and up. For more information, go to [www.mccog.org/aging\\_seniorgames.asp](http://www.mccog.org/aging_seniorgames.asp) or contact local coordinator Tracy Davis at (910) 323-4191, extension 27, or at [tdavis@mccog.org](mailto:tdavis@mccog.org).

## Upcoming Events

- Early voting for the June 7 Congressional Primary Election will be held at the Harnett County Board of Elections at 308 W. Duncan St., Lillington, weekdays from May 26 through June 3 from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Saturday, June 4 from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m. Look up information including your polling location and view sample ballots at [www.harnett.org/elections](http://www.harnett.org/elections).
- A public hearing will be held on the proposed Harnett County Budget for the 2016-17 Fiscal Year Monday, June 6 at 7 p.m. in the County Administration Building at 102 E. Front St., Lillington. The Board of Commissioners are set to vote on the proposed budget, which will go into effect July 1, 2016. You can view a copy of the proposed budget by going to [www.harnett.org](http://www.harnett.org).
- The Central Carolina Community College Foundation will hold its annual Furniture Auction Saturday, June 4 at the Harnett Campus at 1075 E. Cornelius Harnett Blvd., Lillington. Viewing and registration will begin at 9 a.m. with bidding starting at 10 a.m. Call (910) 814-8805 for more information.

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

## Human Resources Corner

# Plan for What Matters to You

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.

Planning for your future doesn't just revolve around numbers and calculators. Instead, focus on what really matters most to you and plan to your values. Here's how to get started with the life you want.

### Consider your values.

Write down what matters most to you such as being able to retire comfortably, paying for your child's top college choice or living debt-free. There are no limits on the size of your list.

Prioritize your list once you have what matters to you written down.

### Know where your money is going.

Look at your monthly expenses — you may be surprised to see where your money is going. It's easy to underestimate the cost of dining out, entertainment and shopping. You may also be spending more than needed on cell phone bills, utilities and weekly groceries. And don't forget monthly credit card spending that you may not pay off when the statement comes.

### Compare your spending values to spending behavior.

Are you saving or investing enough for that comfortable retirement or top college choice? Are you dining out or

seeing movies with all of your extra cash after paying bills each month instead of putting money toward these values? If your spending doesn't align with your values, some changes are in order.

### Plan to your values.

Set financial goals based on your values. Commit more of your finances to what matters most by cutting spending on those things that don't support your values.

Be sure to revisit your values and spending often to keep them aligned.

*The advice given is for informational purposes only. Contact your financial advisor for additional guidance.*

## Open Enrollment Period for Employees is This Month

Harnett County Human Resources will hold open enrollment for employees to sign up for or make changes to their health insurance benefits later this month. Open enrollment will be held May 18, 19, 23, 24 and 25. You will need to schedule a time to attend an open enrollment session using the following link: [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0A4EAEAC22A20-annual2](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0A4EAEAC22A20-annual2).

Employees may bring their spouses

to their open enrollment session, however a session will be held Monday, May 23 at 6 p.m. to accommodate employees with spouses who are unable to attend during the day.

Please note the following changes to benefits for the coming year:

1. Health and Dental Insurance will now be in four tiers:
  - Employee only
  - Employee and spouse

- Employee and child(ren)
  - Employee and family
2. The County will pay the cost of Dental Insurance for employees only.
  3. Superior Vision will be the County's provider for Vision Insurance, which is voluntary.
  4. Transamerica will offer voluntary Whole Life Insurance.

Representatives will be on-site to work with employees.

## Employment Anniversaries

The following Harnett County employees celebrate employment anniversaries in May:

5 years	Bennie Williams (EMS)		James Warren (Transportation)
10 years	Kenneth Raynor (EMS)	15 years	Steve Berube (Animal Services)
	Matthew Meredith (Sheriff's Office)		James Lanier (Sheriff's Office)
	Doris Stewart (Sheriff's Office)		Beulah Washington (Social Services)
	Michael Williams (Sheriff's Office)	20 years	Paula Stewart (Administration)
	Kristen Arnott (Social Services)		Sandra Ashworth (Social Services)
	Jacqueline Thomas (Social Services)	30 years	Kimberly Hargrove (Register of Deeds)

# May Employee Birthdays

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

May 1	Andrew Currin (EMS)			Jerelene McLean (Transportation)
	William Herring (Sheriff's Office)	19		Patricia McKoy (Cooperative Extension)
	Kelly Johnson (Sheriff's Office)			Karolyne De Leon (Library)
	Mayra Franco (Social Services)			Cynthia Humke (Register of Deeds)
2	Deborah Yarborough (Aging)			Nina Smithwick (Solid Waste)
	Jeffrey Smith (Sheriff's Office)	20		Joseph Combs (EMS)
3	Johnny Allen (EMS)			Jim Burgin (Board of Commissioners)
4	Michael Gray (EMS)			Richard Kennedy (Public Utilities)
	Brett Senter (EMS)			Amanda Duntz (Library)
	Theresa Zimmer (Social Services)			Brian Hayes (Sheriff's Office)
5	Michael Hayes (Sheriff's Office)	21		Sean Farley (EMS)
6	Suzanne Prince (Development Services)			Janet Holder (EMS)
	Charlotte Leach (JobLink)			Karen Hamilton (Public Utilities)
7	Benjamin Thomas (Parks & Recreation)			Tracy Bagnato (Library)
	Jannie Sykes (Social Services)			Christopher Zimmerman (Sheriff's Office)
8	Pamela Goodman Amerson (General Services)			Sharon Booker (Social Services)
	Jason Overby (Sheriff's Office)			Sonya Cissell (Social Services)
	Paulette Chance (Transportation)	22		Bennie Williams (EMS)
9	William Surles (Sheriff's Office)			Peggy Barefoot (Tax)
	Sheley Eldridge (Health)	23		Charles Smith (Tax)
	Jonathan Hough (Sheriff's Office)			John Searles (Transportation)
	Crystal Hernandez (Social Services)	24		Toby Guy (Development Services)
10	Betty Wright (Social Services)			Matthew Meredith (Sheriff's Office)
	Timothy Adamaszek (Social Services)			Brent Mendenhall (Sheriff's Office)
11	Gertrude Choosakul (Sheriff's Office)	25		Charlene Sharp (Health)
	Michael McCoy (Sheriff's Office)			Daniel Selvy (Sheriff's Office)
12	Joseph Nelson (EMS)			Amanda Bader (Engineering)
	Tracy Hamby (Sheriff's Office)	26		Mildred Ridley (Aging)
13	Kathleen Collins (Parks & Recreation)			Jacqueline Thomas (Social Services)
14	Hunter Johnston (EMS)			Kelly Vaughan (Social Services)
	Donna Surles (Health)	27		Zane Campbell (EMS)
	Carolyn Brown (Solid Waste)			Tammy Ward (GIS)
15	Roy Gibbs (EMS)			Donna Petty (Social Services)
	Brandi Bronsink (Social Services)	28		Zachary Fernandez (EMS)
16	Ruth McNeill (Social Services)			Janet Tucker (Public Buildings)
	Eric Truesdale (Veterans Services)			Janet McNeill (Transportation)
17	Jennifer Dalton (Animal Services)	30		Gregory Huneycutt (Cooperative Extension)
	Kimberly Lee (Sheriff's Office)			Pamela Walker (Transportation)
	Mary Smith (Transportation)	31		Keisha McKoy (Social Services)
18	James Hooper (Sheriff's Office)			Cheryl Little (Social Services)
	Shannon Autry (Tax)			

Future issues of *The Cornelius* will include employee birthdays for the coming month instead of the current month to allow for advance notice of upcoming birthdays.

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).



## June Employee Birthdays

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

June 1	Lillie King (Transportation)	Monica Haithcock (Health)
2	Aaron Merritt (EMS)	Jennifer Taft (Library)
	Kevin Jackson (IT)	Paul Durazo (Sheriff's Office)
3	Gregory Taylor (Sheriff's Office)	Amber Coats (Social Services)
	David Dowdy (Sheriff's Office)	19 Daniel Thomas (Public Utilities)
	Ronald Lackey (Sheriff's Office)	Auston Williams (Health)
4	Shalonda Blue (IT)	Lori Craven (Social Services)
	Terry Edwards (Transportation)	20 Thomas Armstrong (Public Utilities)
5	Brian Keas (Public Utilities)	21 Robert Barefoot (Emergency Services)
	Dina Barefoot (Sheriff's Office)	Annette Johnson (Health)
6	Bradley Abate (Sheriff's Office)	Yolanda Massey (Health)
	Sean Stewart (Sheriff's Office)	Joshua Smith (Sheriff's Office)
7	Helen Phillips (Social Services)	22 Corey Taylor (Emergency Services)
8	Timothy Lloyd (Sheriff's Office)	Lawrence Smith (Transportation)
	Leslie Jackson (Emergency Services)	23 Mary House (Sheriff's Office)
9	Frances Matthews (Sheriff's Office)	24 Jessica Furse (Emergency Services)
	Shaneka Duckworth (Social Services)	Hyon Hwang (Public Utilities)
	Steven Sorsch (Social Services)	Timothy Stewart (Sheriff's Office)
10	Alexander Belanovich (Emergency Services)	Amanda Dunn (Social Services)
	Shannon Fink (Emergency Services)	25 Stephanie Artis (Register of Deeds)
	Tammy Smith (Health)	Joshua Legan (Sheriff's Office)
11	Patricia Rivera (Transportation)	Jamie Zamora (Social Services)
12	Mary Galbreath (Transportation)	26 Jeffrey Johnson (Emergency Services)
13	John Colvin (Social Services)	Sara Forehand (Emergency Services)
14	Emilia Hinton (Emergency Services)	27 Nancy Tart (Sheriff's Office)
	Keithy McNeill (Public Utilities)	Matthew Perez (Sheriff's Office)
	Tracy Messenger (Public Utilities)	Larry Thomas (Solid Waste)
	Ardith Eyring (Library)	28 Avis Watkins-Smith (Health)
	Steven Bond (Sheriff's Office)	Joshua Christensen (Sheriff's Office)
15	Shannon Eason (Administration)	Angela Montgomery (Social Services)
	Susan Connolly (Emergency Services)	Jessica Drake (Transportation)
	William Moss (Public Utilities)	29 Benjamin Wood (Sheriff's Office)
	Anthony Dickens (Public Utilities)	30 William Lamm (Emergency Services)
	Staci Parker (Social Services)	Teresa Gill (Finance)
16	James Manhart (Health)	Jessie Arnold (Fleet Maintenance)
	Christopher Collins (Sheriff's Office)	Michael Stinecipher (Sheriff's Office)
17	Yvonne McArthur (Tax)	James Reagan (Sheriff's Office)
18	Dwayne Rich (Emergency Services)	Wanda Wilkerson (Social Services)

## Employment Anniversaries

The following Harnett County employees celebrate employment anniversaries in June:

10 years	Jason Guinn (Sheriff's Office)	Brent Mendenhall (Sheriff's Office)
	Michael Knodel (Sheriff's Office)	15 years Paulette Strickland (Social Services)
	Teresa Gill (Finance)	20 years Janet Holder (Emergency Services)
	Denise Vogt (Finance)	Deanna Barefoot (Finance)
	Milton Stewart (Sheriff's Office)	Jerry Gilbert (Sheriff's Office)
	Rodney Jackson (Sheriff's Office)	Timothy Bradley (Sheriff's Office)