



The newly reorganized Harnett County Board of Commissioners—from left are commissioners Barbara McKoy and Abe Elmore, Chairman Gordon Springle, Vice Chairman Joe Miller, and new Commissioner Howard Penny Jr.

New Board of Commissioners Takes Office

The Harnett County Board of Commissioners said goodbye to one of its members, welcomed a new commissioner, and reorganized during the board's December 5 meeting, electing a new chair and vice chair.

Outgoing Harnett County Commissioners Chairman Jim Burgin was honored during the board's last meeting in November after serving two four-year terms in office and twice being elected to serve as the board's chairman.

During the November 21 meeting,

Chairman Burgin received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the State of North Carolina. He also received proclamations of appreciation from the county's five mayors and from the Harnett County Board of Commissioners.

On December 5, the previous board met for the final time before going into recess to allow for the swearing in of new commissioners. Commissioners Gordon Springle and Joe Miller were each sworn into new four-year terms

while Commissioner Howard Penny Jr. was sworn into his first term on the board of commissioners after serving on the Harnett County Board of Education.

The new board then reorganized with Commissioner Gordon Springle selected unanimously to serve as chairman and Commissioner Joe Miller selected unanimously to serve as vice chairman.

For photos from Chairman Burgin's penultimate meeting, see Page 2.

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



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. 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.



Former Harnett County Commissioners Chairman Jim Burgin received numerous honors during the November 21 Board of Commissioners meeting including the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, presented by N.C. Rep. David Lewis, at top; a proclamation from Harnett County's mayors presented by, above middle from left, Dunn Mayor Oscar Harris, Angier Mayor Lew Weatherspoon and Coats Mayor Walter Weeks; and a proclamation from the Harnett County Board of Commissioners recognizing him for his years of service to the County, above.

Harnett County Part of *Our State* Feature on Cape Fear River



Our State Magazine's November 2016 issue featured a tale of a 200-mile journey down the Cape Fear River, passing through Class II rapids in Harnett County and even stopping to eat at Howards Barbecue in Lillington, 'the only restaurant within view of the Cape Fear on the 170 miles of river above Wilmington.' To view the article online, go to capefear.ourstate.com.

Ennis Retires After 30 Years



The Harnett County Public Library held a retirement celebration for Mark Ennis on December 14. Ennis retired from the county after 30 years of working with the Harnett County Public Library. From left above are Deputy County Manager Paula Stewart, Ennis and Library Director Angela McCauley.

Upcoming Events

- Harnett County Parks & Recreation will offer a Couch to 5k program from March 6 through May 3, 2017. The program lasts nine weeks and each workout is no more than 30 minutes in length. The course will take place at Barbecue Creek Park with classes meeting Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. There will also be programs in Erwin and Dunn. To register or for more information, call (910) 893-7518.
- The Harnett County Soil & Water Conservation District is currently accepting applications for the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP). The program is designed to identify opportunities to increase water use efficiency, and to conserve and protect water resources. For more information or for an application, visit the office at 126 Alexander Drive, Lillington, or call (910) 893-7584.
- The Harnett County Public Library offers numerous programs for children of all ages, as well as adults. For a list of program offerings and a calendar with event dates, go to www.harnett.org/library/.

If you know of any important events for future months that should be included in this newsletter, email information to bhaney@harnett.org.

Human Resources Corner

Lower Your Tax Bill with 3 Year-End Tips

In the middle of all the holiday buzz, it may be easy to forget tax season is just around the corner. Instead of giving Uncle Sam more than you may need to, here are a few adjustments you still have time to put in place that could save you money come April 15.

Contribute to retirement accounts

Maximize your 401(k) and IRA contributions. This is a good way to save on taxes by reducing your taxable pay. Also, it's a great way to help you reach longer term goals.

If your finances allow, calculate the dollar limit you have left to contribute. Then bump up those contributions to get as close to the maximum contribution limit set by the IRS.

For 2016, the maximum you can contribute to your 401(k) is \$18,000 or \$24,000 if you are 50 and older. IRA contributions max out at \$5,500 or \$6,500 if you are 50 and older.

Sell off low-performing investments

"Tax loss harvesting" could be another way to lower your taxable income. This strategy works by selling investments (e.g. stocks, mutual funds, etc.) you've made that are



now worth less than you initially paid for them. This may help to offset possible taxes from earnings or gains on income and other investments. This can be a tricky strategy to manage on your own. Be sure to talk with a tax professional to ensure you're making the right decision.

Benefit from HSA and FSA contributions

An HSA (Health Savings Account) is a tax advantaged medical savings account for people with high deductible health plans. An FSA (Flex Spending Account) is

part of employers' benefits package. Contributions get made on a pre-tax basis and are used for qualifying out of pocket medical expenses. These contributions help to reduce your taxable income in the new year.

So consider acting on these tips before December 31. You may lower your tax bill and keep more money in your pocket.

Article provided by Local Government Federal Credit Union. The advice provided is for informational purposes only. Contact a tax advisor for additional guidance.



Caregiver Support Group Holds Annual Craft Fair

The Harnett County Family Caregiver Support Program held the fifth annual Caregiver Holiday Craft Fair December 2 in the Harnett County Governmental Complex Commons. The event offers a great opportunity for shoppers to get a head start on their holiday shopping. Proceeds from the event help fund the Harnett County Department of Social Services Christmas Cheer Program for Harnett County's elderly shut-in residents.

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) Cathy Williams (Tax)		Lisa McFadden (IT) Tierra Brewington (Sheriff's Office)
2	Myra Laster (Social Services)	20	Amber Kozik (Sheriff's Office)
3	Lewis Womack (EMS) Tony Allen Jr. (Public Utilities)		Ethan Core (Sheriff's Office) Elizabeth Gray (Social Services)
4	Kimberly Lee (Health) Beth West (Social Services)	21 22	Jamie Hargis (Public Utilities) Zachary Shean (Emergency Services)
5	David Dowdy (Public Utilities) Jerry Bomhan (Sheriff's Office)		Amy Johnson (Sheriff's Office) Paul Phillips (Sheriff's Office)
6	Patricia Chalmers (Health) Warren Jeffries (Sheriff's Office)		Wendy Butcher (Social Services) Laura Byrd (Social Services)
7	Taylor Ray (Public Utilities) Jamie Hwang (Sheriff's Office) Katrina Blue (Social Services)	23	James Haney (Solid Waste) James Warren (Transportation) Jay Smith (Development Services)
8	Frederick Devoe (Transportation) Jesse Neighbors (Sheriff's Office) Jillian Leslie (Social Services)		Karen Moore (GIS) Susanna Macias (Social Services) Tracey Davis (Social Services)
9	Mary Elskamp (EMS) Brittany Riggs (Sheriff's Office)		Moriah Green (Social Services) Larry Johnson (Solid Waste)
10	Rose Lee (Social Services) Kriston Stone (Social Services) Crystal Thomas (Tax)	24 25	Jennifer Haney (EMS) Tyerica Newton (Social Services) Leslie Owens (EMS)
12	Thakida McDougald (Social Services)		Lasheika Blue (Social Services) Eric Thornton (Social Services)
13	Princess Davis (Social Services) Phyllis Edens (Social Services)	26	Brenda Cameron (Social Services) Ruth Burgun (Social Services)
14	William Wade (Sheriff's Office)		Kim Williams (Transportation)
15	Shelia Sudia (Finance) Thomas Cummings (Public Utilities) Ashley Howard (Social Services) Milton Holland (Solid Waste)	27	Marva Walden (Health) Daphne Tyler (Social Services) Tammy Harrington (Social Services)
16	Anitra Hart (Joblink) Morgan Wood (Sheriff's Office) Randolph Clegg (Public Utilities) Copelia Madzivanyika (Transportation)	28	Wesley Jacobs (EMS) Lacey McLean (EMS) Samuel Massa (EMS) Kiki Turner (Social Services)
17	Katy Perez (Human Resources) Joseph Coupee (Sheriff's Office)	29	Charles West (EMS) Brenda Stancil (EMS) Carolyn Murayama (Public Utilities)
18	Stephanie Jordan (EMS) Vickie Hicks (Health) Marcus Allen (Sheriff's Office)	30	Lorie Babb (Register of Deeds) Margaret Wheeler (Administration) Sean Burke (GIS)
19	James Wester (EMS) Tina Blackmon (Health)	31	Lenora Dawson (Sheriff's Office)

Employment Anniversaries

The following Harnett County employees celebrate employment anniversaries in January 2017:

5 years	Thomas Cummings (Public Utilities) David Dowdy (Public Utilities) Yolanda Massey (Health) David Oakley (Sheriff's Office) Donna Ray (Sheriff's Office) Johnny Carroll (Sheriff's Office) Travis Collins (Sheriff's Office) Monica Stewart (Social Services)	10 years	Morgan Wood (Sheriff's Office) Patti Wilder (Finance) Wanda Thomas (Sheriff's Office) Edward McLamb (Sheriff's Office) Kerry Willis (Social Services)
		15 years	Charlene Sharp (Health)
		20 years	Jaime Phelps (Public Utilities) Steven Ward (Public Utilities)



Above, the playground and fields at the Old Boone Trail School will soon see new life when Harnett County Parks & Recreation develops a portion of the former school site into a new community park. The former school's gym and media center will also be repurposed to provide recreational programming.

Park Coming to Old Boone Trail School Site

Harnett County Parks & Recreation has announced plans to develop a new park and community center at the Old Boone Trail School property on Old U.S. 421. The proposed park will incorporate the former school's media center, gymnasium and ball fields, and will also include a picnic shelter, small outdoor basketball court and a walking trail. Additionally, the site will serve as a satellite location for the Harnett County Public Library.

Harnett County Parks & Recreation Director Carl Davis said the park will provide recreational opportunities in a portion of the county that is currently underserved.

The idea for the park came about after citizens in the Boone Trail community asked county officials to help them preserve portions of the abandoned school.

Harnett County Commissioners Chairman Gordon Springle said he was glad county staff were able to come up with a plan to preserve part of the former school site and to provide much needed services in the area.

"It's really because of the support of



the community that we were able to make this happen," he said.

Beginning in late January or early February, staff will begin opening the gym twice a week for open play. They will also install new fencing for the ball fields, and construct a new picnic shelter and small outdoor basketball court. In February, staff will install infields and add a walking trail.

In March, the county will open the former media center as a community center, which will house a satellite location of the Harnett County Public Library with nearly 1,000 books as well as

newspaper and magazine subscriptions. The site will serve as a pickup and drop-off location for reserved books, and will offer programs in fitness, arts and crafts, story time, and movies.

Staff will evaluate existing programs in Summer 2017, and will develop a plan for the site that could include youth and adult sports programs, after-school care and other community-driven programming in the fall.

For more information about Harnett County Parks & Recreation, go to www.harnett.org/parkrec/ or call (910) 893-7518.

Deputies Participate in Shop With a Sheriff Event



The Harnett County Sheriff's Office held their annual Shop With a Sheriff event December 19 at the Harnett County Sheriff's Office in Lillington. This year, 19 participants were selected to attend the event.

Deputies cooked hot dogs and hamburgers for participants and their families, and Harnett County Sheriff Wayne Coats and Sgt. Aaron Meredith spoke briefly and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Following lunch, participants were escorted by deputies in patrol cars to Walmart in Dunn where they were each given a \$300 gift card to purchase toys and clothes, and were assigned a deputy to assist them with shopping. Shop With a Sheriff participants were selected through referrals from agencies throughout the county including local law enforcement agencies and the Harnett County Department of Social Services. Money for the program is raised through sponsorships of the annual Shop With a Sheriff golf tournament, which is held in

May at Chicora Country Club. Deputies who participated in the event volunteered their time. Additionally, the Shop With a Sheriff Board donated 10 stockings that were filled with toys and essentials to foster children before Christmas.



Employees Honored During Holiday Luncheon



Harnett County held its annual Employee Holiday Luncheon on December 9 in the Harnett County Commons Area. During the event, employees who worked for the county for 20 years (top), 25 years (at right) and 30 years (bottom right) received Service Awards while the County also honored its 2016 retirees (bottom left). County employees sang “The Twelve Days of Christmas” and dressed up for a holiday photo booth. Photos of the event can be found along with the program on the P Drive in the folder ‘Annual Employee Luncheon.’

