



# HARNETT CONNECT

Employee Newsletter | Keeping You Connected

ISSUE 2 | MARCH/APRIL 2023

## HARNETT COUNTY NAMES DESIREE PATRICK AS NEW COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR



Harnett County has named Desiree Patrick as the new Community Relations Director effective March 6, 2023. In this role, Patrick will manage the County's Public Information Office, overseeing the communications, marketing, and community relations efforts between the County and its residents.

Patrick brings over 10 years of experience in communications, marketing, and public relations.

"I am excited that Desiree Patrick has joined our team as Community Relations Director," said Brent Trout, Harnett County Manager. "We look forward to the work that she will accomplish with our community, departments, and local businesses. Her expertise will be a great addition to our organization."

[READ MORE](#)



## HARNETT COUNTY WELCOMES ELIZABETH EDWARDS AS NEW MARKETING DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Harnett County is proud to announce Elizabeth Edwards as the first Marketing Director for Economic Development effective February 20, 2023. She brings over 15 years of experience leading digital marketing and communication initiatives, serving most recently as the Director of Communications and Donor Relations at William Peace University.

Prior to her position at William Peace University, Elizabeth led an alumni engagement communications strategy for Campbell University, guided communications and digital marketing efforts for the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, and supported global branding, economic development, and tourism-related promotions for the North Carolina Department of Commerce.

"We are thrilled to welcome Elizabeth Edwards to Harnett County," said Christian Lockamy, Director of Economic Development. "Elizabeth has the drive and experience to lead our inaugural marketing efforts. We are very fortunate to have Elizabeth join our team."

[READ MORE](#)

# ANGIER & BLACK RIVER FIRE DISTRICTS RECEIVE NEW RATING AFTER INSPECTION

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner and State Fire Marshal Mike Causey announced today that the following Fire Districts completed their routine inspection and received the listed rating, on listed effective dates. The inspection, conducted by officials with the Department of Insurance Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), is required on a regular basis as part of the North Carolina Response Rating System (NCRRS). Among other things, the routine inspections look for proper staffing levels, sufficient equipment, proper maintenance of equipment, communications capabilities and availability of a water source.

DISTRICT	TYPE	RATING	EFFECTIVE
Angier	Municipal	3	5/01/2023
Black River	Rural	3/9E	5/01/2023

The NCRRS rating system ranges from one (highest) to 10 (not recognized as a certified fire department by the state), with most rural departments falling into the 9S category. While lower ratings do not necessarily indicate poor service, a higher rating does suggest that a department is overall better equipped to respond to fires in its district. Higher ratings can also significantly lower homeowners insurance rates in that fire district.



## HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM (SECTION 8)

The Sanford Housing Authority's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waiting list opened Tuesday, February 7, 2023, and close Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 4 p.m.

The HCV Program is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and provides housing assistance to low-income families.

You may pick up applications at the Main office Applications or download online.

**APPLICATIONS MUST BE  
SUBMITTED VIA THE MAIN OFFICE  
OR BY MAIL.**

**APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE  
ACCEPTED ELECTRONICALLY OR  
BY FAX.**



# COMMISSIONER'S MEETING SCHEDULE

## Harnett County Board of Commissioners

### APRIL SCHEDULE

**BOARD MEETING**  
MONDAY, APRIL 3 9:00 AM

**WORK SESSION**  
TUESDAY, APRIL 11 9:00 AM

**BOARD MEETING**  
MONDAY, APRIL 17 6:00 PM

**WORK SESSION**  
TUESDAY, APRIL 25 9:00 AM

The Harnett County Board of Commissioners hold regular meetings on the first Monday of each month at 9:00 AM and the third Monday of each month at 6:00 PM. Meetings are held in the Commissioner Meeting Room on the second floor of the Harnett County Resource Center and Library, located at 455 McKinney Parkway in Lillington. Unable to attend the meetings in person? Watch the live stream at [www.harnett.org/boc](http://www.harnett.org/boc).

**Missed a recent Commissioners Meeting or Work Session? Watch meetings on our Youtube Channel by clicking the red button below!**



## LEADERSHIP HARNETT C/O 2023

Leadership Harnett provides professional development opportunities for anyone who lives or works in Harnett County and aims to educate and inspire diverse groups of future leaders who are representatives of the county's population. Participants spend eight months learning about points of interests across Harnett County.

On, Wednesday, March 22, the Leadership Harnett class of 2023 gathered together for their kick-off session and team building activities at Camp Agape. This was the first session since the 2019 class graduated. Check out a few photos below:





# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Harnett County Economic Development Partnership Holds Inaugural Planning Retreat

The Harnett County Economic Development Partnership Board of Directors held its inaugural planning retreat in Raleigh on February 23, 2023. This meeting convened to review last year's progress and unite behind new annual priorities, outlining a plan of action for the coming year.

**READ MORE** >>

### ILC Dover Chooses Lillington to Expand Biopharma Footprint

ILC Dover LP, a world-leader in the design and production of solutions for biopharmaceutical, pharmaceutical, and medical device markets, as well as a leading supplier for the aerospace industries, has completed construction of a 48,000-square-foot-facility at 900 Edwards Drive in Lillington.

**READ MORE** >>

### Harnett County Economic Development has launched a new website

Visit online at [www.harnettedc.org](http://www.harnettedc.org) to learn more about our county's unique advantages and all that it has to offer businesses and industries looking to expand or relocate.

Do you follow Harnett County Economic Development on social media? Find them on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to keep up with all news and updates related to economic development in Harnett County.

## SOLID WASTE



### HARNETT COUNTY SOLID WASTE HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

Looking to do a little Spring cleaning? Harnett County Solid Waste Department will host a FREE Household Hazardous Waste Collection event for Harnett County residents on Saturday, May 6th, 2023 at the Harnett County Courthouse.

#### ACCEPTED ITEMS

Paint and paint thinners, furniture strippers & finishing products, solvents & degreasers, wood preservatives, polishes, aerosols, fluorescent light tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs, NiCad batteries, alkaline batteries, lithium batteries, propane cylinders, swimming pool chemicals, used motor oil, antifreeze, gasoline, hydraulic transmission & brake fluid.

#### EVENT REMINDERS

- Pesticides, herbicides, fungicides & insecticides WILL BE accepted but MUST be in its original containers for identification purposes.
- All liquids MUST be left in a container at the event

#### Sponsored by:

\*NC Cooperative Extension

\*NC Department of

Agriculture & Consumer Services



Harnett County Solid Waste | 910-814-6156 | [www.harnett.org](http://www.harnett.org)

#### EVENT DETAILS



Saturday, May 6th



9:00 am - 12:00pm



**Harnett County  
Courthouse**

301 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd.  
Lillington, NC

**HARNETT  
COUNTY  
RESIDENTS  
ONLY**

**NO  
COMMERCIAL  
WASTE WILL BE  
ACCEPTED**

### HARNETT COUNTY SOLID WASTE

## FREE PAPER SHRED EVENT

**Thursday, May 18 | 9am-12pm**

**Harnett County Public Building Parking Lot**  
200 Alexander Drive, Lillington NC 27546

Looking to do a little spring cleaning? Bring your personal documents to be shredded safely and securely for FREE by a certified mobile shred truck.



#### FREE event for Harnett County Residents

- Residential shredding ONLY (no commercial shredding)
- Limit of 10 boxes or bags
- Only shredded paper will be recycled. Participants must take bags and boxes
- No cardboard, binder clips, 3-ring binders, or electronic media will be accepted



Harnett County Solid Waste | 910-814-6156 | [www.harnett.org/waste](http://www.harnett.org/waste)



# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## SMALL BUSINESS CENTER

### HOW TO USE INSTAGRAM REELS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

**Tuesday, April 4, 2023 | 12:30-1:30 p.m. | Online**

Instagram is a great way to market your business. But, have you created Reels before? Reels is the new flagship of the platform & they help to increase engagement & gain followers. Instructor, Chisa Pennix will host a lively webinar to show you how to create a Reel from scratch, access music to add to your reels, and will show you how to find trending sounds.



### I HAVE AN IDEA. DO I NEED A LAWYER?

**Friday, April 14, 2023 | 12:00-1:30 p.m. | Online**

Have an idea but not sure if you need a Lawyer? Join instructor, Bryan McGann and the Duke Law Clinic hosted in partnership with Innovate Carolina and Central Carolina Community for a virtual workshop on the important legal advice you need to move forward. This presentation is for early-stage startups or entrepreneurs all around the triangle.



**For more information on Small Business Center - Harnett County, NC & Triangle South Enterprise Center, visit <http://www.harnettsbc.com/>**



**CLICK THE ICON ABOVE TO REGISTER FOR UPCOMING SEMINARS!**

## FINANCE DEPARTMENT

At the 2023 spring conference, members of the North Carolina Government Finance Officers Association (NCGFOA), elected Harnett County Deputy Finance Officer Allen L. Coats to the President position on its Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of the President, President Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, and three directors elected from the Members at large to serve one-year terms.

"I am honored to be selected by my fellow local government professionals from across the state to serve in this capacity. Over my nearly 30 year career the NCGFOA has provided me with countless hours of quality continuing professional education and I am excited to assist in continuing that excellence," Coats said.

The NCGFOA, an association of over 400 local government finance professionals, promotes the improvement of the methods of governmental finance in North Carolina as developed and recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada, the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), The North Carolina Department of the State Treasurer, and other recognized authorities in the field of government administration.

Find out more about the NCGFOA at <http://www.ncgfoa.org/>.

# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## LIBRARY EVENTS



### TECHNOLOGY CLASSES eBooks, eAudiobooks and eNewspapers

Mon, Apr 10 at 6:00 pm  
Tues, Apr 11 at 10:00 am

Registration Required



## Storytime

**WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS**

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Harnett County Public Library

**TODDLERS @ 10 A.M.**  
(18 MONTHS - 2 YEARS)

**PRESCHOOL @ 11 A.M.**  
(3 - 5 YEARS)

### Cemetery Preservation Workshop

Does your family cemetery need some love and attention? Do you want to preserve local and family history?

Then please join the Dunn Area Cemetery Preservation & Genealogy Group to learn gentle, no-harm techniques for cleaning headstones in this hands-on workshop.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 15TH FROM 10AM UNTIL 11:30AM**

At the Lillington Baptist Church Cemetery located at the corner of W Front St. and S 10th St. on the south side of Hwy. 421, Lillington.

For important information, visit [harnett.org/library](http://harnett.org/library)  
Call (910) 893-3446  
Or use the QR Code to the right:



### Attracting Pollinators

Join local beekeeper, Paul Hart, and learn how to attract pollinators to your yard.

**April 17th @ 6pm-7pm**  
**Harnett County Public Library**

Meeting Room A

Registration Required



Please wear comfortable shoes to tour the Pollinator Garden.



Sponsored by Harnett County Parks and Recreation and the Harnett County Public Library

### Raising Chickens



Join Richard Goforth, of NCSU, for a class on the basics of raising chickens.



**WHERE: BOONE TRAIL COMMUNITY CENTER**  
8500 OLD 421, LILLINGTON, NC (MAMERS)  
**WHEN: APRIL 24 6:00PM-7:00PM**



### WILLS AND ESTATE CLINIC

Legal Aid's "Disaster Relief Project" is conducting a free Wills and Estate Clinic at the Harnett County Public Library.

In this presentation, you will learn about:

- heir property matters
- wills/living wills
- powers of attorney
- estate planning
- healthcare decision-making

**MONDAY, APRIL 24TH AT 11AM**  
**OR SATURDAY, APRIL 29TH AT 10AM**



HARNETT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY  
455 MCKINNEY PKWY  
LILLINGTON, NC  
(910) 893-3446



# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## LIBRARY EVENTS

**Spring BREAK**  
at the  
**Erwin Public Library!**

Join us all week long for fun activities!

**Monday April 10, 1 PM**  
Spring Painting  
Come and paint with us!  
Canvas and paint provided! \*\*  
Registration Required.

**Tuesday April 11, 1 PM**  
Pet Adoption!  
Come adopt your very own  
stuffed pet at Erwin Public  
Library! \*\* Registration  
Required

**Wednesday April 12, All Day!**  
Outdoor fun!  
Join us for bubbles, sidewalk  
chalk competition, hula hoops  
and more

**Thursday April 13, All Day**  
Make a birdfeeder to take home and  
hang in your yard and garden!

**Friday April 14, All Day**  
SLIME  
Join us to create your very own batch  
of slime to take home. Choose your  
own unique colors and mix-ins!

Follow us!  
@erwinpubliclibrary

Harnett  
COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Public Library System

**ERWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
GAME SCHOOL DAY**

A board game extravaganza for all ages.  
Come Play with us!  
All Ages Welcome!

**MONDAY  
APRIL 17  
2-5 PM**

FOLLOW US!  
@ERWINPUBLICLIBRARY

Harnett  
COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Public Library System

**ADULT CRAFT EVENT**

**Color Your  
Own  
Suncatcher**

**April 20, 2023  
3 - 4 PM**  
Registration  
Requested

Erwin Public Library  
110 W. F St.  
Erwin, NC 28339  
FOLLOW US ON FB!

Harnett  
COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Public Library System

**Harnett County Public Library**  
**LUNCH and LEARN**  
ROAD SAFETY, SOIL HEALTH, AND PLANTING

JOIN US AS WE TEAM UP WITH HARNETT COUNTY SOIL AND WATER TO BRING  
YOU FARM ROAD SAFETY, INFORMATION ON SOIL HEALTH, AND PLANTING.

**April 21st @ 12**

A LIGHT LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED, AS WELL AS YOUR CHOICE  
OF STARTED PLANT TO RE-POT AND TAKE HOME.

THIS IS A FREE LIBRARY PROGRAM INTENDED FOR ADULTS. ALL MATERIALS PROVIDED

**ERWIN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**LEGO CLUB**

**Friday  
April 21  
3:30 PM**

Come build something Spring!

Follow Us!  
@ERWINPUBLICLIBRARY

Harnett  
COUNTY  
NORTH CAROLINA  
Public Library System

For more information on Library programs and events, visit [harnett.libguides.com/hcpl](https://harnett.libguides.com/hcpl) or call 910-893-3446.



## PARKS AND RECREATION

### Food Truck Thursdays

Join us for lunch on Food Truck Thursdays in April. Food Truck vendors will be parked in the Resource Center & Library parking lot from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Thursday, April 6:**  
Wild Sunflower Pizza  
Frey Papi

**Thursday, April 20:**  
Mr. Puebla Tacos  
Carolina Braised



# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

### COVID-19 POSITIVE- TELEMEDICINE APPOINTMENT

Get COVID-19 treatment quickly with a free telemedicine appointment without leaving home. You have to start taking treatment within 5 days after your symptoms begin – seek treatment early. People who test positive for COVID-19 with an at-home test or other method can set up an appointment online at <https://starmed.care/nc/> or call 704-941-6000, seven days a week from 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. There is no cost to the patient.



**For more information on Health Department programs and events, visit [harnett.org/health](https://harnett.org/health) or call (910) 893-7550**

### RAPID ANTIGEN COVID-19 TESTING

Rapid Antigen COVID-19 testing is available in Lillington each Friday from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. at the Governmental Complex-Commons. An appointment is recommended. To schedule an appointment, please call 910-814-6582. The Health Department is located within the Governmental Complex at 309 W. Cornelius Harnett Blvd in Lillington.

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## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

### CHRISTEN HAYES IS THE FIELD SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR FOR THE SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT AT CAMPBELL UNIVERSITY

Christen Hayes is currently the field supervisor for a Social Work Intern and spends a lot of time making sure her intern learns the many aspects of being a Child Protective Services Social Worker. On March 31, Hayes was recognized as the Field Supervisor of the Year for the Social Work Department at Campbell University. Hayes was an intern for Harnett County Department of Social Services in Child Protective Services (CPS), while she was in school completing her college education. After graduating, she worked in the CPS unit for 3 months and transitioned into a full-time CPS Social Worker position. Hayes is a thoughtful and kind social worker and co-worker. She is detail oriented, flexible and willing to take on any task. She tries to help others as much as she can and brings happiness and humor to our agency. We are so proud of her and excited that she is receiving this well-deserved award.

–Terri J. Crisp



# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## COOPERATIVE SERVICES

### SAVE THE DATE

### SEED THE NEED TO READ

April 22, 2023



### SEED THE NEED TO READ

Save the date for our first-ever Seed the Need to Read event on April 22, 2023, from 10:00 am-2:00 pm at Harnett County Agriculture Center (126 Alexander Drive, Lillington) for a day filled with gardening fun and family activities.

**For more information on Health Department programs and events, visit [harnett.ces.ncsu.edu/](http://harnett.ces.ncsu.edu/) or call (910) 893-7530**

## EMERGENCY SERVICES



From Left To Right: EMS Chief Alex Belanovich, Academy Instructor Captain Jonathan Murphy, Cadets William Slaughter, Micah Ellington, Jennifer Davis, Nathan Trautman, William Borbas, Elana Melvin, Academy Instructor Captain David Cowan - PAC, and EMS Assistant Chief of Training West Barefoot

Harnett County Emergency Services, EMS Division is proud to announce the beginning of an in-house Paramedic Academy. Harnett County EMS Paramedic Academy is a rigorous 30-week didactic and clinical program that allows trained Emergency Medical Technicians to advance in certification to the highest EMS credential, that of a Paramedic. Six full-time EMS employees were selected to be in the first Paramedic Academy cohort to obtain the qualifications necessary to sit for the State Paramedic exam in seven months instead of the 13 to 15 months in a traditional paramedic con-ed program format. This program was designed to enable employees to advance in certification while enabling our EMS Division to obtain quality Paramedics in half the time. This paramedic academy began as a joint partnership between Harnett County Emergency Services - EMS Division and Central Carolina Community College. It is a first of its kind in the state and will be a model for agencies throughout North Carolina. Thank you to the Harnett County Board of Commissioners and Harnett County Administration for enabling our Division to begin this state-of-the-art program.

# DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

## STARS PROGRAM

Are you ready to see what the future has in store for you?  
Let us help you find a solution!

Johnston-Lee-Harnett Community Action's Community Services Block Grant Program is seeking individuals that are ready to make a positive change in their lives!

The STARS Program provides one-on-one assistance in case management, setting goals, educational assistance, and MORE!

**For more information, please call Kelly or Denise at (910) 814-8360**

**Johnston-Lee Harnett Community Action  
252 Irene Roberts Road, Suite 101, Lillington, NC 27546**


Johnston-Lee-Harnett Community Action's Community Services Block Grant Program is seeking individuals that are ready to make a positive change in their lives.

The STARS Program provides the opportunity for one-on-one assistance in the following:

1. Case Management
2. Setting Goals
3. Assessing your job skills/ locating employment.
4. Creating an effective résumé.
5. Educational Assistance
6. Securing Standard Affordable Housing
7. Budgeting/Money Management/Financial Literacy

**Questions?**

Can you see what the future has in store for you?



**Answers!**

For more information, please call Kelly or Denise at 910-814-8360  
Johnston-Lee-Harnett Community Action  
252 Irene Roberts Road, Suite 101, Lillington, NC 27546

**Let Us Help You Find a Solution**

## SPRING LITTER SWEEP APRIL 1ST-APRIL 29TH

Keep Harnett Beautiful is a citizen volunteer effort to protect our watersheds, water quality, and help keep our environment litter-free. All supplies needed are provided.

First place team (total amount of FULL bags) will receive 4 hours of admin leave!!!  
Second and Third place team (total amount of FULL bags) will receive 2 hours of admin leave!!!

Per Tire = 1 bag  
Chair = 2 bags  
Couch = 3 bags  
Large/Heavy Items = 4 bags



**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO COORDINATE  
A ROADSIDE SWEEP, CONTACT  
MORGAN POPE BY  
TEXTING THE WORD "LITTER" TO  
910-514-2054 OR EMAIL [MPOPE@HARNETT.ORG](mailto:mpope@harnett.org).**



## KEEP HARNETT BEAUTIFUL

It's that time for our bi-annual Keep Harnett Beautiful Litter Sweep! This effort seeks volunteers to pick up roadside litter throughout Harnett County.

There will be an employee challenge for teams up to five individuals. Register your team [here](#).

Save the date for the May 4 cookout for the employees who participated.

**For more information, please contact Morgan Pope at 910-893-7584 or [mpope@harnett.org](mailto:mpope@harnett.org)**



## DEPARTMENT NEWS & UPDATES

### DELL'S SEMI-ANNUAL SALE

Dell's Semi-Annual Sale is still going on until April 6th!

Below are a few of the deals that are available to Harnett County employees. Click on your custom URL below to find these deals.

Accessible on your exclusive member page: [www.dell.com/mpp/harnett-nc](http://www.dell.com/mpp/harnett-nc)

- XPS 15 Laptop - \$1,349 (save \$550) - sale ends 4/6
- Alienware Aurora Ryzen Edition R14 Gaming Desktop - \$999.99 (Save \$760) - sale ends 4/6



## HUMAN RESOURCES

### WELCOME NEW HARNETT EMPLOYEES



February 6, 2023 New Hire Orientation Class



February 20, 2023 New Hire Orientation Class



March 6, 2023 New Hire Orientation Class



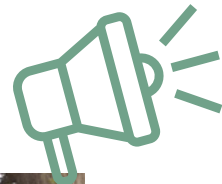
March 20, 2023 New Hire Orientation Class

## HUMAN RESOURCES CORNER

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR EMPLOYEES BORN IN  
MARCH AND APRIL!!**



**EMPLOYEE SHOUTOUT**



Mitchell Womack of the Soil and Water Conservation Office has fought thick briars, avoided snakes, climbed steep embankments, and trudged through wetlands over the last year to oversee crews and inspect completed work during the recently completed Emergency Watershed Protection Program stream debris removal project. Over the course of the past 18 months, Mitchell has been the primary staff person in the Soil and Water Conservation Office to oversee the EWP project resulting in 71 total miles of stream debris removal within the Upper Little River, Anderson Creek, and the Lower Little River. He has done an outstanding job of fighting the elements to reach oftentimes secluded locations along the riverbanks to access debris blockages and monitor crew progress. He has also forged many positive relationships with landowners keeping them abreast of project progress through numerous phone calls and field visits. As a result of this project, water now flows more freely within the natural river channels during large rain events reducing lowland flooding therefore protecting both property and lives of citizens. A secondary success of this project is that the rivers are now more accessible for recreation with several reports being made from citizens of now being able to safely float the river with their families by kayak. Mitchell has the perfect skill set to tackle the elements for a project of this nature while also representing Harnett County in a positive light to the many citizens owning land along the project area. Mitchell Moore and Kenneth Matthews recently received their sprinkler license. This will be instrumental for the Facilities Department to have additional staff to repair and replace broken sprinkler heads.

# HUMAN RESOURCES CORNER

## MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

MARCH 2023

### Enhancing Mental Health With Nutrition

Some people who are managing mental health conditions may turn to food to self-soothe or find emotional support—others may avoid or limit food intake. These choices can create discomfort for the brain and exacerbate pre-existing feelings. Fortunately, increased mental strain can be remedied by making different—and healthier—food choices. A healthy mind and body are essential elements in coping with mental health issues or other related conditions.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, only 1 in 10 adults eats the recommended amount of fruits or vegetables, so you may need to strive to eat more of those essential food groups. Regardless of if you're battling a mental health condition, fruits and vegetables are crucial for maintaining good health. In addition, health experts recommend incorporating the following into your diet to help improve mental health:

- **Fermented foods** (e.g., kimchi, miso, kombucha, kefir and yogurt)

- **Omega-3 fatty acids** (e.g., salmon, flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, avocado and olive oil)
- **Spices** (e.g., turmeric, oregano, rosemary, ginger and garlic)
- **Tea** (e.g., green, chamomile and herbal)
- **Vitamin D** (e.g., eggs, fortified milk, mushrooms and salmon)

One of the best ways to sustain a healthy diet is to stock your pantry and refrigerator with easy-to-grab nutritious foods. March is National Nutrition Month, making it a great time to assess your nutrition and ensure you're serving your mind and body well.

### Selecting a Mental Health Professional

For the many Americans that seek help from mental health professionals, selecting a provider is an important decision that should be made carefully. Since mental health professionals all have different roles, it's important to understand what each can offer. Here are some common types of mental health professionals:

- **Counselors, clinicians or therapists** are similar but differ based on skills and job responsibilities. They typically choose a specialization (e.g., marriage and family), but can all evaluate mental health, connect with patients and provide guidance.
- **Psychiatrists** are licensed medical doctors. They can diagnose mental health conditions, provide therapy and prescribe and monitor medications.
- **Psychologists** can make mental health diagnoses based on psychological evaluations. They can provide therapy and additional healthy ways to handle mental health challenges.

- **Social workers** can evaluate mental health and offer therapy services. They can aid in recovery from various behavioral, emotional and mental challenges.

### Who's the Best Fit?

Finding the right mental health professional requires a bit of work, so here are some ways to locate a provider:

- Get referrals from your physician, friends or family members.
- Ask your health insurance company for a list of providers.
- Check your employer's employee assistance program for a referral.

Be sure to consider factors that are important to you, such as age, gender, language and cultural background. You'll be establishing a long-term relationship with this person, and you need to feel as comfortable with them as possible. Choosing a mental health provider can be challenging, but you don't need to go through it alone. Remember to ask family, friends or your primary physician for assistance.



## BENEFITS

We had 35 attendees to the most recent retirement preparation meeting in March! Stay tuned for the next meeting which will be scheduled in July!

## Checkout these Living Well Videos



**"UNLOCK THE CHEF WITHIN!" 5 ESSENTIAL COOKING TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED**

**3 HABITS TO FIND HAPPINESS "CHANGE YOUR LIFE."**



## WELLNESS WINNERS



Winners (water bottle, small strap bag, sweat towel)

Week 1: LeeAnn Blackmon

Week 2: Larry Smith

Week 3: Denise Vogt

Week 4: Petrina Smith (picture above)



Over all winners (must have participated each week in the questionnaire)

Fit Bit: Claire Jones (picture above)

\$50 Visa Gift Card: Anna Peele



## HUMAN RESOURCES CORNER

### DID YOU KNOW THAT HARNETT COUNTY HAS DISCOUNTS FOR VARIOUS RETAILERS?

Vitamin Shoppe  
Fit4Life  
ClubWORX (Fuquay-Varina)  
Planet Fitness  
Kings Dominion  
Carowinds

Check out your newsletter email for more information!

### EMPLOYEE BENEFITS OPEN ENROLLMENT

May 2- May 12, 2023

Open Enrollment provides an opportunity for you to review benefits you have and verify the right family members are covered. Open Enrollment is the only time to make changes to your benefits outside of qualified events.

You can self enroll yourself or meet face-to-face with a benefits representative. Register below to schedule your in-person appointment to discuss your benefits for the effective date of July 1, 2023.

**REGISTER**

CLICK THE ICON TO REGISTER

### JOB REFERRAL PROGRAM

Don't forget that you can receive 4 hours of admin leave if you refer an individual to apply for a vacant position and that individual is successfully hired! Help us spread the word that Harnett County is HIRING and is a GREAT place to work!

**JOIN OUR TEAM**



**GET CONNECTED!  
STAY UP TO DATE WITH THE  
LATEST HARNETT COUNTY NEWS ON  
SOCIAL MEDIA!**



[www.harnett.org](http://www.harnett.org)



[@HarnettCounty](https://www.facebook.com/HarnettCounty)



[@Harnett\\_County](https://www.instagram.com/Harnett_County)



[@HarnettCounty](https://twitter.com/HarnettCounty)



[Harnett County Government](https://www.youtube.com/HarnettCountyGovernment)



[Harnett County Government](https://www.harnett.org)



For more information, contact:  
Harnett County Public Information  
455 McKinney Parkway  
Lillington, NC 27546  
910-893-7555

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