



# Employee Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2008

Edgecombe County

## From the County Manager

I am so pleased to know that 93 employees entered the Biggest Loser contest. That is about one-fifth of our staff, which is great participation. It has been encouraging to see so many of you taking your health seriously. I know that making changes for better health is not easy; I'm in the contest too. Many of us have been practicing poor health habits for a long time, and they are not easy to break.

I do hope that we will continue these healthy habits long after the contest is over, and the prizes have been claimed. Better health

can not be truly achieved by diet fads, but rather lifestyle changes. So let's continue to work hard and encourage one another. If we can live a healthier, happier life, then we all will be winners.

I also want to say thank you to the members of the Wellness Committee for their hard work and for coming up with these creative ideas. I think we can expect to see more things in the future. If you have some ideas and would like to be on the committee, call one of the members listed under the "We Got the Power" announcement.



Speaking of that, congratulations to those who participated in the first quarter of the wellness program, especially those who accumulated enough points to win a prize. I encourage others to join in during the second quarter that will begin March 3rd.

### Dates to Remember

- County Commissioners' Meeting March 3rd 2:00 PM
- First Aid/CPR Class March 18th

### Brainteaser

Unscramble the following words. The first word is the category and the rest fit the category.

rtsspo  
 nentis  
 cocers  
 ootllabf  
 fglo  
 ktblseebalb

It's time to enroll for the second quarter of the Edgecombe County...

*"We've got the power in wellness" program*

Enrollment date:  
March 3<sup>rd</sup> - March 7<sup>th</sup>

Where:  
County Administration  
Carolyn Hedgepeth or  
Frances Wright  
Health Department  
Jenny Newton  
DSS

Betty Battle  
Second Quarter will run  
March 3<sup>rd</sup> - June 3<sup>rd</sup>

If you are currently enrolled you will automatically be reenrolled, but if you no longer wish to participate you will need to contact one of the persons above. Only new enrollees need to fill out an application.

## Flu Cases On The Rise!

The Center for Disease Control has reported that seasonal influenza activity has increased in the last few weeks. Twenty two children in the US have died from the flu.

Flu strains "drift" or mutate each year, and therefore a vaccine has to be formulated months ahead based on the strains the CDC anticipates will be prevalent during the flu season. Even though the



vaccine can't be 100% in preventing the flu, it does still reduce the chances of contracting it, and can even limit its symptoms or duration. Flu shots are especially recommended for children 6 months - 5 years; people over 50; those with chronic illness; and pregnant women.

Health Director, Karen Lachapelle reports that the flu is in Edgecombe County. She says the best approach is prevention, including:

Avoiding close contact

with people who are sick

Stay home when you are sick

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing

**WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN**

Practice good health habits by getting plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.



Answer to the Brainteaser

- Sports
- Tennis
- Soccer
- Football
- Golf
- Basketball

Quote of the Month

Everything has its beauty, but not everyone sees it.

Confucius



James Pearce, Cooperative Extension Director and NC State Tourism Class seen here at the Main Street Inn bed and breakfast in Tarboro.

## Economic Stimulus Tax Rebates

Do you have questions about the economic stimulus tax rebates? The Internal Revenue Service has developed a useful page on its Website to clear up some of the confusion. You can also find out approximately how much money you can expect to receive. The information can be found at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) – then click on Rebate Questions. Here are some key points:

- You must file a federal income tax return for 2007 to receive a payment.
- A taxpayer must have a valid Social Security number to qualify.
- If you qualify, the IRS will

- automatically calculate the payment for you.
- The payment will be separate from a regular tax refund.
- You will not owe taxes on the rebate payment.
- The rebate payment will not affect eligibility for other federal benefits, such as TANF, Food Stamps, or Social Security.
- If you owe federal income taxes from a previous year, the rebate payment will likely be used to pay past-due federal or state income taxes. The payment can also be applied to non-tax federal debt, such as student loans and child support.
- The Treasury Department will

begin distributing payments in May.

Now is a good time think about how to use the rebate money wisely. What are your genuine needs? Can the money be used to pay off bills? Do you need an emergency savings account? Are you contributing enough to retirement savings? Have you saved money for a family vacation? This is your bonus money, so map out a plan for how it can contribute to your family's economic security.

*Connie Sherrill,  
Edgecombe  
Cooperative Extension*

## Employee News

The next CPR/First Aid class will be offered on March 18th. Any staff that have not taken it are encouraged to do so. Sign up immediately so that it can be determined if there are enough students to hold the class. Being trained in CPR/First Aid can be life saving for someone, even a family member. To register, call George Cherry at 641-7806

Congratulations to those employees who participated in the first round of the wellness program and accumulated enough points to win a prize. They were...

150 Point Category

Delphine Wiggins, Lorenzo Carmon, Nell Tharrington, Michael Matthews,

Frances Wright, JoAnne Harrell, Gloria Lyndaker, Deborah Hunter, Tarasa Lewis

100 Point

Carolyn Hedgepeth, Sherry Barrett, Eric Evans

75 Point

Trina Brinkley, Yvonne Brown, Lisa Warren, Michelle Etheridge, Leslie Hinnant

50 Point

Tawana White, Dollie Bland

### Employees Wanted to Assist with Elections

Qualification:  
Must Attend Trainings  
Must be a County Resident  
Must work within your precinct  
Must be available for the entire day

Perks for your Assistance:  
Minimum \$100 Bonus per election day (paid through payroll)

You do not lose a vacation day

Additional Comp time for any overtime during that week

Interested?  
Call Jerry Spruell, Elections Director  
641-7854



## NC State Tourism Study

A Tourism class from NC State is working on a tourism study/strategic plan for Edgecombe County. The class is working to identify tourism assets in the County and will develop a proposed strategy for promoting the tourism industry in the County.

The class spent 2 days in the County where they attended a Commissioners' meeting, visited the East Carolina Agriculture and Education Center in Kingsboro, toured historic Tarboro, visited a hunting lodge and a

local bed & breakfast, and participated in a Tourism Roundtable. They will return in March and get to visit other parts of the County.

Many of the students have commented that they were surprised to see how many tourism assets the County has. They were excited to meet local people and hear the history of the County. Though the study is still underway, they already report of a lot of opportunity in tourism for the Edgecombe County.

Tourism is a multibillion dollar industry in NC, and already generates over \$48 million in Edgecombe County. NC is the 8th most visited state, and Edgecombe County can very well capitalize on that. Many of us who live and work here never really see all of the tourism assets we have, but there are many. These are things that many already visit us to enjoy, and many more would if they knew about them.