

# The Inside Word

## Employee Newsletter – January 2006

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*Phyllis Talbot -Editor*

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### A Message from our Director

When Santa Left! I looked far and wide for the special gift not knowing that in spite of all the money spent; the special gift was never intended to be under the tree but in my heart.

I walked out of the house while it was yet dark and gazed above and thought of my family and you, my family too!

January is here now and we are in this together. Working with others is always better done when there is a sense of togetherness. Togetherness allows more to get done at a lower cost. It also allows for a level of support of the individual effort. Therefore, the watch word for January 2006 is "Togetherness" – you, me, and our Board – working together to meet the needs of our Community.

*Mavis E. Rouse*

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### Facing the Enemies Within

We are not born with courage, but neither are we born with fear. Maybe some of our fears are brought on by your own experiences, by what someone has told you, by what you've read in the papers.

Some fears are valid, like walking alone in a bad part of town at two o'clock in the morning. But once you learn to avoid that situation, you won't need to live in fear of it. Fears, even the most basic ones, can totally destroy our ambitions. Fear can destroy fortunes. Fear can destroy relationships. Fear, if left unchecked, can destroy our lives. Fear is one of the many enemies lurking inside us. Let me tell you about five of the other enemies we face from within.

The first enemy that you've got to destroy before it destroys you is indifference. What a tragic disease this is. "Ho-hum, let it slide. I'll just drift along." Here's one problem with drifting: you can't drift your way to the top of the mountain.

The second enemy we face is indecision. Indecision is the thief of opportunity and enterprise. It will steal your chances for a better future. Take a sword to this enemy.

The third enemy inside is doubt. Sure, there's room for healthy skepticism. You can't believe everything. But you also can't let doubt take over. Many people doubt the past, doubt the future, doubt each other, doubt the government, doubt the possibilities and doubt the opportunities. Worst of all, they doubt themselves. I'm telling you, doubt will destroy your life and your chances of success. It will empty both your bank account and your heart. Doubt is an enemy. Go after it. Get rid of it.

The fourth enemy within is worry. We've all got to worry some. Just don't let it conquer you. Instead, let it alarm you. Worry can be useful. If you step off the curb in New York City and a taxi is coming, you've got to worry. But you can't let worry loose like a mad dog that drives you into a small corner. Here's what you've got to do with your worries: drive them into a small corner. Whatever is out to get you, you've got to get it. Whatever is pushing on you, you've got to push back.

The fifth interior enemy is over-caution. It is the timid approach to life. Timidity is not a virtue (unlike humility--they are different); in fact, it can be an illness. If you let it go, it'll conquer you. Timid people don't get promoted. They don't advance and grow and become powerful in the marketplace. You've got to avoid over-caution. Do battle with the enemy. Do battle with your fears. Build your courage to fight what's holding you back, what's keeping you from your goals and dreams. Be courageous in your life and in your pursuit of the things you want and the person you want to become.

*(Thanks to Jim Rohn, Author, speaker, and philosopher)*

## January Service Anniversaries

| <i>Employee</i>   | <i>Unit</i>                 | <i>Yrs.</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Gloria Applewhite | Food Stamps – Tarboro       | 27          |
| Peggy Lyons       | Food Stamps – Tarboro       | 19          |
| Tilda Marshall    | Children Services – Tarboro | 18          |
| Janet Johnson     | WFFA – Tarboro              | 15          |
| Marie Goodloe     | Children Services – Tarboro | 12          |
| John Jones        | Maintenance – Tarboro       | 12          |
| Nikicia Randall   | Medicaid – Rocky Mount      | 11          |
| Patricia Woodard  | Clerical – Rocky Mount      | 10          |
| Iris Batts        | Children Services – RM      | 8           |
| Linda Williams    | Work First – Tarboro        | 8           |
| Lucretia Greaux   | Children Services – Tarboro | 7           |
| Deborah Hunter    | Children Services – Tarboro | 6           |
| Stephanie Bottoms | Food Stamps – RM            | 5           |
| Paula Dickens     | Children Services – Tarboro | 5           |
| Dorothy Lancaster | Work First – Rocky Mount    | 5           |
| Melissa Hamilton  | Work First – Rocky Mount    | 1           |
| Bobby Heath       | Children Services - Tarboro | 1           |

## January Birthdays

| <i>Day</i> | <i>Employee</i>   | <i>Unit/Area</i>            |
|------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Jan 4      | Amy Fenstemaker   | Children Services – Tarboro |
| 5          | Debra McNeil      | WFFA & Fraud – RM           |
| 6          | Yvonne Winston    | Children Services – Tarboro |
| 8          | Bertha Allen      | Food Stamps – RM            |
| 11         | Dorothy Lancaster | Work First – Rocky Mount    |
| 14         | Cora Culpepper    | Children Services – Tarboro |
| 17         | Bensanee Sherrod  | Work First – Rocky Mount    |
| 18         | Lisha Fussell     | Child Support – Tarboro     |
| 21         | Terill Pitt       | Work First - Tarboro        |

## Promotion within the Agency

Congratulations to Melissa Hamilton who was promoted to the position of Social Worker III in the Children Services Unit in Tarboro. This promotion is effective December 1, 2005.

## Congratulations to our New Employees

**Michael Jelovich** - Michael began working on December 21st in the Medicaid Unit in the Rocky Mount office.

## DSS Weight-Off Project

Dewana Murrey, Office Support Unit, is the lucky winner of the \$25 Wal-Mart gift card. Dewana lost a total of 2 ½ pounds during the month of December. Congratulations! Just a few statistics for December:

- Overall loss in both offices was 11 ½ pounds.
- Overall gain in both offices was 27 ½ pounds.
- Total loss in Tarboro was 5 ½ pounds
- Total gain in Tarboro was 5 pounds.
- Total loss in Rocky Mount was 6 pounds.
- Total gain in Rocky Mount was 22 ½ pounds.



## Who They Are & What They Do

### Personnel – Quality Staff & Recruitment Process

The primary source of referral for vacancies, when recruiting outside of the agency is the Employment Security Commission. Interested persons are referred to their local ECS/Job Service Office. Vacancies are advertised in our local and out-of town newspapers. Other sources of recruitment include county departments, surrounding agencies, universities, local colleges and temporary agencies.

The Employment Security Commission refers applicants to the agency for interviewing and selection consideration. Interviews are usually conducted in-group sessions and for most all classifications there is some type of testing involved. The final authority for hiring decisions rests with the agency Director.

The agency has various positions and requirements for education and experience vary. Support positions must have high school and/or appropriate experience. Income Maintenance positions usually require a high school graduation and two to three years of paraprofessional experience; and Social Work positions normally require an MSW or BSW from an accredited school of social work or appropriate experience or a four year degree in a field related to social work combined with appropriate experience.

Edgecombe County Department of Social Services currently has 174 employees on staff. For more information regarding recruitment you may contact Betty Battle, Human Resource Officer at 641-7690.

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## Agency News

### Social Services Board Meeting:

The agency hosted a Christmas social prior to the Social Services Board Meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

All management staff was invited to attend the social and board meeting.



During the December Social Services Board Meeting the Board presented Senator Clark Jenkins, Representative Joe Tolson, and Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield with a framed resolution expressing appreciation for their advocacy and support with Day Care Issues. Pictured: Rep. Tolson



### Adult Services:

- Charles Parker will be leaving the agency on February 1, 2006. He will be retiring with 30 years of services to our community.
- The Adult Services Unit provided Christmas baskets to senior families that were provided by the Mentor Club from Tarboro High School. The Club held a food drive and donated the items specifically for senior families during the holiday season.



### Children Services:

- Janet Thursby gave birth to a daughter on December 9<sup>th</sup>, Haley weighed in at 7 lbs. Janet is set to return to work March 1.
- Multiple Response System (MRS) is officially here in Edgecombe County! Our staff has been working diligently to get our implementation strategies in place and we are moving in the right direction. Effective now, all counties in the state should be on board and all agency staff will hear more as we launch into new territory. Internal collaboration will advance with Work First Employment/TIP as well as with all agency programs and the community. So, get set and listen for news coming your way!
- Our foster children were treated to special donations at a Christmas party on December 23! Thanks to our staff for supporting the party, fun at the movies, great food and of course the experience for children in our custody. We have made significant strides this year in addressing the needs on a short and long term basis for children in DSS custody. Our goal is to make a positive difference in their lives. Thanks to agency staff for supporting our efforts through the year to show care and concern to children needing safe and permanent homes!

**Work First:**

- On December 13, Calvary Episcopal Church in Tarboro hosted a Christmas party for Work First customers. This is the third year the church has honored our customers with a party, but the members enthusiastically agreed that the party this year was the best yet. All of them expressed how much the customers had uplifted them! We shared conversation, food, song, and fellowship. The church presented gifts to the Work First customers and let them know that they too are special. We discovered the unknown talents of two of our social workers, Jennifer Askew and Linda Williams who led us in song. The minister, Bill Smyth played the piano for our enjoyment. You may be interested to know that the church also purchases Wal-Mart gift cards for us to use in assisting our customers with special needs not covered by social services programs. Additionally, the church members supply us with baby diapers which are in great demand because of the cost and because they cannot be purchased with food stamps. We are so grateful for the relationship with this community partner who continues to provide great support to our Work First customers.

**Fiscal Unit:**

- Samia Smith has recently learned that she is going to be a Grandmother again. Her daughter, Karen is going to have a baby in August, 2005. Congratulations, Sam.
- The fiscal unit wants to thank everyone that has helped us with our Relay for Life fund raiser – collection of soda cans. We really appreciate all your help. We continue to collect cans. Please drop off your cans to the fiscal unit or call us and we will pick them up.

**Medicaid – Rocky Mount Unit:**

- Rocky Mount Medicaid has a new worker, Michael Jelovich. He began working on December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Office Support – Rocky Mount:**

- Patricia A. Woodard's daughter, Johnnequa Patrice Thompson, an 8th grader at Nash Central Middle School was asked to enter her art work in the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) Minority Arts Contest that is being held in Raleigh. The winner will be announced in January 2006 at their banquet. The winner will also receive two tickets to attend the banquet.

**DSS Christmas Project:**

- Phyllis Talbot, Administrative Assistant to the Director, coordinated the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Department of Social Services Christmas Project. Families and children are referred to Phyllis for Christmas Assistance by the agency's Social Workers, T.I.P. Social Workers, Tarboro Clinic Pediatric Physicians, Edgecombe County Health Department Social Workers, Edgecombe County School Social Workers, Community Enrichment Organization, Tarboro Community Outreach and several area ministers. This year, 132 Edgecombe County families with 948 children requested or were referred for some type of Christmas assistance through Phyllis. Through this project many families were able to enjoy a very happy holiday season. Sponsors included Eastern Hydraulics, Consolidated Diesel, Howard Memorial Presbyterian Church, Edgecombe Community College Nursing Program, Edgecombe County Administration, Dr. David & Natalie Miller, Church of God of Deliverance, Cherry Hill Church, Lakeside Church, Calvary Episcopal Church, Nomaco, Pattillo A+ School, Tarboro Board of Realtors, Mr. Jeffery Smith, and 3,000 toys delivered by the United States Marines Toys for Tots. Toys were delivered to a local church where they were sorted and bagged for each family. Photos below of toys prior to sorting and during sorting.



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## Relay for Life

The agency's Relay for Life team will begin recruiting for members on January 1, 2006. We would really like to have at least 30 members or more. Please, please help us in this effort to help others by polling your staff and having them contact Carol Mitchell or Linda Jackson in Food Stamps if they would like to become a member of the DSS team. We already have some really neat

ideas for a theme and for the props. We need to make our campsite the best! We have already set up a "Web Site" for our team and will review all of this and how to view when we have our first meeting. I am sure that with your support we will be able to reach our goal of 30 members and \$3,000.00. A meeting will be set up soon!!!! Thanks for the support I know you will give this very worthy cause.

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## For Your Information

### Organizing Your New Year's Resolutions

Now that the new year is here, do yourself a favor and resolve to do something organizing-related each day. Here are 8 simple ideas:

1. Pick a project. Each day do an organizing project that will take a mere 10 minutes or less. Some possibilities are weeding out a junk drawer or file folder, deleting 10 email messages you don't need, writing out a bill or two, or cleaning up some of the clutter that's on your bedroom dresser surface.
2. Don't wait until later. Don't wait for something to get completely out of hand before you begin focusing on it. Instead, load the dishwasher immediately after each meal, iron whatever you need to as soon as it's removed from the dryer, file papers on a daily basis and put your outerwear into the coat closet rather than first tossing it over a chair.
3. Do something on tomorrow's to do list. Use 15 minutes each night to start and/or complete something you have listed on tomorrow's to do list. When tomorrow arrives, you'll already be ahead of schedule.
4. Allocate YOU time. Every day, you should have YOU time scheduled on your calendar--that is, time you spend on yourself doing something you truly enjoy doing. Keep this appointment with yourself, just as you would any other important appointment.
5. Take a moment to think. Each time you're asked to do something that doesn't normally fall into your regular schedule this year--such as attending a community function or being asked to help organize a spring event—force yourself to say, 'I'll have to check my schedule and get back to you.' In doing so, you'll have a little bit of time to determine whether or not a) this is something you truly want to do and b) whether or not it fits into your schedule. If you determine a day later that you want to do it, call and tell the person YES. However, if you determine that doing this extra project or task won't work for you, be strong and call the person to let him know you can't over-extend yourself this month. People won't respect your schedule, until YOU respect your schedule.
6. Measure where you are. Setting goals is great, and definitely something you should do. However, it can't end there. Each day, check your list of goals to determine how far you've gotten on each of them. Mark percentages next to each goal, such as Goal 1, 10% completed, or Goal 2, 50% completed. Numerical goals are more concrete.
7. Stop paper before it starts. Open your mail over the recycle container and immediately dump all junk before it ever has a chance to hit your kitchen table. Once you put it down temporarily, there's a very high chance it will sit there for days. Go through it each day. Dump what you don't need. File what you do need--in a Tickler file for papers that require action, or in a filing cabinet for papers needed simply for future reference.
8. Take notes and make lists. The average person has too much to remember on a daily basis to remember it all without writing it down. Keep a notepad, organizer or PDA with you at all times so you can easily jot down notes and lists when the thought occurs. All your thoughts will be consolidated in one place and you'll know exactly where to find them.

P.S. Make 2006 your year to finally get organized.

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## F.Y.I. - Submitted from Staff

Dewana Murrey submitted this for the newsletter. If you can't find the sentence, call Dewana for the answer.

**Question:** Find the hidden words mixed in the letters below. Together they make a sentence.

SLENITEOVBNLSLETAKESOPEKDMOREXOWAQNSHEYMUSCLESNDTASTOWORSFROWNBYWTHANZHRYTOAGNBBS  
MILEXHYE