



# FOCUS ON CURRITUCK

A Report to the Community by Currituck County Government

Winter 2010



## Elections Bring Many New Faces to County Positions

Throughout the 2010 primary and general elections, Currituck County citizens voted for change in nearly all races. Within the nine local elections, only one incumbent - Sheriff Susan Johnson - retained her position.

As a result, Currituck County welcomes three new members to both the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education. In addition, citizens will now be served by a new Clerk of Superior Court and new Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor.

To the Board of Commissioners, voters selected Marion Gilbert, Paul Martin and H.M. 'Butch' Petrey. Gilbert now represents District 5, Petrey represents District 3 and Martin fills one of two At-Large seats.

Each is a registered Republican and their victories created an all-Republican Board of Commissioners, as they join sitting Republicans Vance Aydlett, Owen Etheridge, Paul O'Neal and John Rorer.

This trend fits with Currituck's overall voting patterns as a county. Of more than 2,100 voters who selected a straight-party ticket, 59.7% chose Republican.

The Board of Education's new look was created as citizens voted in Bill Dobney, Karen Etheridge and Jackie Simmons. Dobney fills an At-Large seat, while Etheridge represents the Poplar Branch Township and Simmons represents Crawford Township.

The race for Clerk of Superior Court was

evenly contested, as Ray Matusko won a very close election. Nearly 7,000 votes were cast and Matusko's close victory required a recount.

The election for Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor was a three-candidate race, with Tommy Grandy prevailing.



As the lone incumbent to win, Sheriff Johnson (left) held off a tough challenge. Nearly 8,000 ballots were cast in the race, with 58% in favor of Johnson.

A link to official results can be found at [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com).

## YMCA Groundbreaking Draws a Large Turnout

A large crowd of elected officials, county staff, YMCA representatives and several enthusiastic citizens gathered October 28, 2010 to celebrate the onset of construction of Currituck County's new Community Center.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held at the facility's future site, next to the Cooperative Extension Center in Barco. Speakers during the ceremony were County Manager Dan Scanlon, Board of Commissioners Chairman Paul O'Neal and John Padgett, Chairman of the YMCA Board of South Hampton Roads. Scanlon informed the crowd that the building should be ready for a public opening by December 2011.

Participating in the groundbreaking were members of the Board of Commissioners and YMCA representatives. The commissioners were also joined by members of the Senior Center Advisory Board and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board.



Currituck County and YMCA officials break ground on Oct. 28, 2010

The facility will be approximately 73,000 square feet in size. Along with the YMCA, the Community Center will also house a Senior Center, staff offices for the Currituck Parks and Recreation Department and regional medical facilities.

## Operation Santa Needs Community Participation

Once again, the Currituck County Department of Social Services (DSS) is conducting Operation Santa. This great program helps needy families, children and elderly citizens enjoy the holiday season.

In 2009, Operation Santa provided gifts to 627 children, 15 foster children, 11 disabled adults and 45 elderly citizens in Currituck County. The number of those needing assistance was an all-time high in Currituck.

As in years past, DSS needs help from the community to make the 2010 Operation Santa a success. There are several ways in which families, individuals, community groups and businesses can help others in the community who may be less fortunate.

Donations may be made in the following ways:

- Donate new toys for needy children. Contact Kathy Romm at

232-6041.

- Donate money or Christmas gift cards for foster children, to be distributed by foster care staff. Contact Vickie Moore at 232-6040.
- Sponsor needy children in Currituck County by providing gifts. Contact Kathy Romm at 232-6041.
- Donate food or money for the Food Baskets for the Elderly Program. Contact Carla Mebane at 232-6039.

Anyone who sponsors children may choose to meet with the family and distribute gifts in person. Donations may also be made in anonymous fashion directly to the Social Services office.

For monetary donations, checks should be made payable to "Currituck County" and mailed to the Department of Social Services, P.O. Box 99, Currituck, NC 27929. For more information, contact the DSS office at 252-232-3083.

### FIND INSIDE

Lowe brings local ties to Cooperative Extension; p. 2

Paramedic takes missionary trip to Haiti; p. 2

Sheriff's Office connects with CrimeReports.com; p. 3

Currituck County government in cyberspace; p. 3

Form a CERT to improve community safety; p. 4

4H Youth are 'Hungry to Help'; p. 5

News and events from the Currituck Library; p. 6

Foster parenting may be for you; p. 7

2010 Holiday Festival and Parade; p. 8

and MUCH MORE!!

## Lowe Brings Local Ties to Extension Leadership

Citizens of Currituck County would be hard pressed to find someone with stronger ties to the local Cooperative Extension than its new director, Cameron Lowe.

A native of Currituck County, Lowe was involved in Cooperative Extension during her childhood, through her graduation from Currituck County High School in 1994. She participated in numerous 4-H activities and equestrian events while growing up in Currituck.

After obtaining both bachelor's and master's degrees from NC State, Lowe served as a 4-H Agent in Dare and Pasquotank counties and had frequent interaction with the Currituck programs. She has significant experience teaching Biotechnology in the Currituck school system

And if that weren't enough, Lowe's father is Rodney Sawyer, whose name is synonymous with Cooperative Extension in Currituck County. Sawyer served for 30 years in Cooperative Extension and was the director for

25 years before retiring in 2009.

But rather than feeling pressure to emulate her father, Lowe instead sees him as a resource to help the Extension staff achieve the program's goals.

"Cooperative Extension will always be an educational organization," Lowe said. "I don't feel any pressure to live up to his expectations. He'll be a good resource for us."

Lowe plans to continue the success of Cooperative Extension by focusing on programs with positive community impact. Programs will be tailored to needs of county residents and technology will play a large role in helping improving citizens' quality of life. She praised the county for acquiring and renovating the Rural Center property.

"The Rural Center is a tremendous asset," Lowe said. "There are many activities we can do now that could not be done before without that facility."



Lowe began her new post in September, succeeding former director Georgia Kight. Like Sawyer, Kight also worked in Cooperative Extension for 30 years.

With seemingly large shoes to fill, Lowe appears very confident as she settles into her job. She hopes for a long career in Cooperative Extension and her enthusiasm is readily apparent.

"I didn't realize how excited I'd be about this job until I got in the position," she said. "It's a perfect fit."

## Elliott Takes Reins at Airport



Jim Elliott, a native of Elizabeth City, stepped into the manager's role at the Currituck Regional Airport on October 6, 2010. Elliott succeeds Roger Lambertson.

Elliott brings an extensive aviation background to Currituck County. He previously spent 18 years on active duty in the Coast Guard, during which time he piloted C-130 aircraft. Elliott also has been a pilot for United Airlines.

"I'm excited to be here," Elliott said. "It's a good feeling to be selected for this position. I feel a bit humbled and excited."

Elliott arrives during a time of growth. Construction has begun on a new taxiway, which will allow airplanes to enter and exit the runway in a more efficient and safe manner. The taxiway should be completed within the next year, Elliott said.

"This airport stands to support a lot of growth," Elliott said. "I hope to bring my passion for aviation to the table here."

## Travel & Tourism Fills Important Staff Positions

As it gears up promotions for current off-season specials and next year's vacation season, the Travel and Tourism Department filled two important positions.



Clayton Howard is the Promotions and Events Coordinator. Clayton (above) is a Currituck native. He attended East Carolina University and graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Business Management.

The position of Promotions and Events Coordinator is new to Currituck County. Clayton is responsible for the Events Marketing Assistance Program, which assists local non-profits, civic groups and businesses with promoting cultural events that attract visitors to Currituck.

In addition, Clayton will head up efforts to promote family reunions and weddings as well assisting with the

annual Independence Day Celebration in Corolla. Clayton may be contacted at 252-435-2938.

A new face on the staff at the Welcome Center in Moyock is Judy Vassar, who is the Visitor Relations Coordinator.

Judy (right) comes to Currituck from Winston-Salem, North Carolina and brings with her years of experience in sales, public relations, and marketing. Her past positions include community relations manager for Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center, membership manager for the Greater Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce and sales manager for Stouffer Hotels.



Judy will assist the marketing team in promoting Currituck County and will be involved with community organizations. Judy can be reached at 252-435-2947.

## Currituck Paramedic Travels to Haiti on Medical Missionary Trip

A paramedic on the staff of Currituck County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) spent a week this fall on a medical mission to Haiti, volunteering in a public health clinic.



Jamie Styron journeyed to Haiti from October 2 - 9, 2010. Through arrangements made by an EMS colleague, Styron traveled with a group from Faith Lutheran Church in Troy, Michigan. Once in Haiti, the team established a free health clinic on the site of a damaged church with no running water.

Because of the poor living conditions and lack of medical supplies in Haiti, the clinic was well-received in the community. Styron estimates that more than 800

Haitians received free health care in the clinic during the week. Her group had to take their own medical supplies and were faced with a wide range of injuries and illnesses, in patients from babies to senior citizens. Translators helped the medical staff communicate with the Haitian citizens, who speak Creole.

According to Styron, a vast majority of Haitians do not have access to health care and other basic necessities in the aftermath of the major earthquake that struck Haiti on January 12, 2010. She observed many citizens living in tents, makeshift shacks or simply out in the open.

"They were so grateful and happy to see us, they just don't care that they don't have much," Styron said. "They just want people to come help and bring things such as medical supplies."

Styron used her annual vacation leave to make the trip and received donations from family and friends to help cover expenses. She described the trip as a "life-altering experience".



In February, a team of Currituck paramedics will travel to Jacmel, Haiti. They plan to open a free clinic for six days. Anyone who would like to make a financial contribution to this trip can e-mail Captain Stephanie Flowers at [stephanie.flowers@currituckcountync.gov](mailto:stephanie.flowers@currituckcountync.gov).

## Visitor Information Centers Enjoy Increased Traffic

The Currituck County Department of Travel & Tourism is pleased to announce an increase in the number of visitors coming into the county's visitor information centers, as well as more people choosing to vacation in Currituck.

Vacationers who came into the Welcome Center in Moyock increased 20 percent for the summer months of June, July and August, comparing 2010 to 2009. The total number of guests in the center during this time was 28,883; last year's total was 24,060 guests.

The visitor center in Corolla also saw an increase in guests. Totals for the summer months were 21,422 visitors, an increase of eight percent over 2009, when 19,808 visitors came into the center.



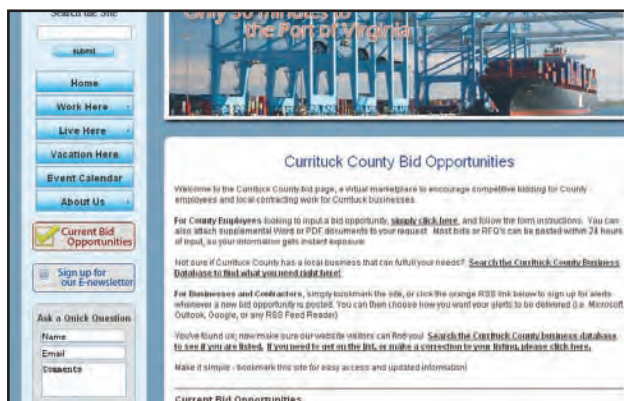
The total number of guests in both information centers was 50,305 for the 2010 season, which is up 15 percent from last year's total of 43,868 guests.

Occupancy (lodging) tax collections for Currituck County was up for July and August 2010. For July, the occupancy tax was up three percent compared to July 2009; August 2010 collections were up 29 percent from the same month of last year.

## Economic Development Launches Bid Page

The Economic Development Department created a new bid & RFP page to better communicate contracting opportunities with the local business community. The page can be found on [www.ThinkCurrituck.com](http://www.ThinkCurrituck.com) by clicking the Current Bid Opportunities icon on the left column.

The webpage is a common virtual marketplace with a simple user interface, email-updates and searchable local business database to make finding the right match for projects simple.



Staff will post opportunities for local companies to bid on projects ranging from lawn care, engineering, surveys, marketing, printing and more. Visit or bookmark the page today and sign up for updates to help grow your business!

## Sheriff's Office Connects to CrimeReports.com

The Sheriff's Office is pleased to announce their crime data is now available on CrimeReports.com. Currituck residents can stay up-to-date on criminal activity occurring near their home, business or child's school.

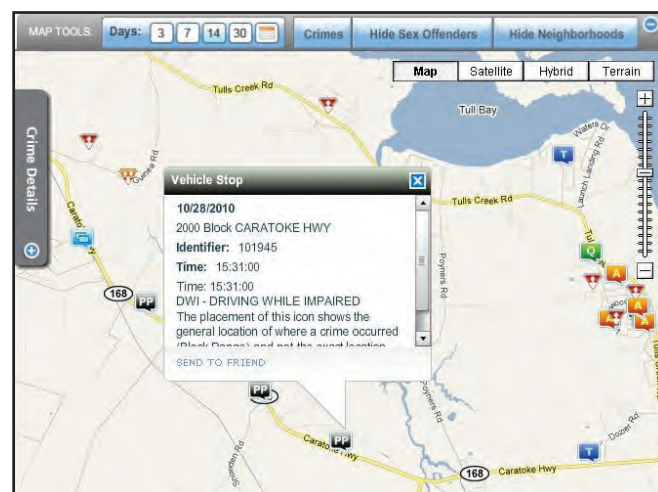
There are 14 categories which are broken down into approximately thirty subcategories. These categories are comprised of many different crimes. Some categories are non-criminal Community Policing Activities that can be displayed on the map. CrimeReports.com also maps the national database of registered sex offenders in the United States.

The default setting displays those categories most often requested by the public and includes such reported incidents as robbery, assault, burglary, theft and sex offenders. In addition to viewing mapped crime, simple reports and charts help depict current trends.

Crime alerts are one of the most popular features. Residents can register online to receive free updates via e-mail, Facebook or an I-phone application whenever new crime activity occurs in the areas they request. Home, school or work addresses are free to the citizens.

The data posted to CrimeReports.com is extracted from the Currituck Sheriff's Office records management

system every twenty-four hours, so the data being viewed is typically up-to-date.



CrimeReports.com can be accessed directly at [www.crimereports.com](http://www.crimereports.com) or through Currituck's government website, [www.currituckgovernment.com](http://www.currituckgovernment.com).

"Information is a powerful tool and I hope this will go a long way in encouraging the citizens of Currituck to provide additional information to the Sheriff's Office to help us prevent and solve crime," Sheriff Susan D. Johnson said.

## Currituck County is Out There - Take a Look!

Citizens should have no trouble finding information concerning the various aspects of Currituck County government. County staff has spent considerable time developing a strong online presence for county government and has made every effort to make information available in an easy-to-find manner.

The foundation of Currituck County's online presence is the government website, which can be found at [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com). It provides updated news and event information, contacts for county staff, GIS mapping features, real estate searches, meeting agendas and much more.

The foundation of Currituck County's online presence is the government website, which can be found at [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com). It provides updated news and event information, contacts for county staff, GIS mapping features, real estate searches, meeting agendas and much more.



CurrituckGovernment.com provides live video coverage of meetings of the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education. An extensive video archive contains all past meetings, as well as county-produced informational videos such as the "Birds Eye View".

Currituck County has received high praise from the John Locke Foundation for the transparency and effectiveness of [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com). Using a grading scale, this organization rates every county website in the North Carolina. Currituck has a current grade of B.

Of the state's 100 counties, Currituck is one of only 25 to receive an A or B grade.

Currituck County also has a very attractive and useful website maintained by the Travel and Tourism Department. This can be found at [www.VisitCurrituck.com](http://www.VisitCurrituck.com).

VisitCurrituck.com is loaded with information to help vacationers enjoy their trip to Currituck County. Guests can access information regarding lodging, transportation, dining, indoor and outdoor activities, children's activities, historical attractions and more.

VisitCurrituck.com won the 2010 Platinum Destination Marketing Achievement Award for Best Web-Based Marketing Initiative in North Carolina. In winning, Currituck beat out larger destinations such as Charlotte, Raleigh and Fayetteville.

On average, VisitCurrituck.com receives more than 50,000 visits each month. Online users also make more than 160,000 page views each month.



As you've already seen on this page, Economic Development Department is growing a very effective website. This can be accessed at [www.ThinkCurrituck.com](http://www.ThinkCurrituck.com). It is a beneficial tool for local businesses, with information to help them grow and succeed in a tough economy. Additionally, this page highlights an initiative of the Sheriff's Office to connect citizens with crime data on CrimeReports.com.

The Planning Department created a special web address to focus on the ongoing project to rewrite the Unified Development Ordinance. This can be accessed at [www.NewCodeCurrituck.com](http://www.NewCodeCurrituck.com).

Currituck County staff has also worked hard to develop a strong social networking presence. The Tourism staff maintains a host of options, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Likewise, county government maintains a Twitter feed and posts all meeting and informational videos on YouTube. County government is currently developing a Facebook page for news and events and the Currituck Library already operates a Facebook page.



Currituck government is out there - just take a look!



## EM Recaps Busy Hurricane Season

Looking back at this Hurricane season, it was certainly all that it was predicted to be. In May, NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) released their 2010 Hurricane Season Forecast. They predicted:

- 14 to 23 named storms
- 8-14 Hurricanes
- 3-7 Major Hurricanes (Cat. 3 and above)

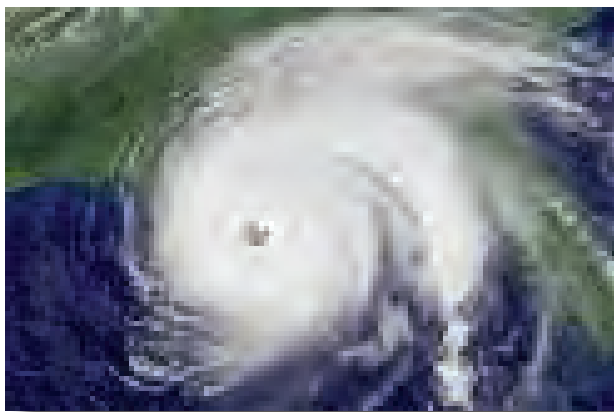
As the season closes, we've seen:

- 19 Named storms
- 12 Hurricanes
- 5 Major Hurricanes

Currituck County felt the effects from two of these systems. Hurricane Earl brushed our coast in early September. The remnants of Tropical Storm Nicole moved through at the end of September.

This was the most active hurricane season in five years, with the third-most named storms and the second-most hurricanes. While advancements in technology are getting better at predicting oceanic activity, the mystery still remains as to where the activity will take place.

However, once the path of the storm is determined, the National Hurricane Center is able to publish storm watches and warnings sooner. Early information allows us the ability to make evacuation decisions quicker.



Now, as we move into the winter months, it's time to shift attention to winter hazards. It's a good time to check your emergency kits again. Here in Currituck, ice accumulation is not a regular occurrence, so don't forget to talk to your family about ice safety.

Would you like an Emergency Management presentation for your neighborhood, church, club or business? Would you like to go over your emergency plan? Do you have questions about what kind of hazards to plan for? Call Emergency Management at 232-2115.

## WINTER WEATHER SAFETY TIPS

### Outdoor safety

Ice covered water can appear to be solid enough to support your weight; however walking on ice in our area is extremely dangerous. Experts say that ice must reach a clear thickness of at least four inches to support the weight of one person. Ice of that thickness takes an extended period of constantly below freezing temperatures to form.

Currituck County very rarely maintains temperatures to allow sufficient ice formation to support a person. Ice formation in our area is also inconsistent. Ice that appears to be thick in one location is often paper thin only a short distance away. Because of the danger to children who may be tempted to play on ice covered water, parents are asked to warn their children of the hazards of playing or walking on ice.

Similar dangers occur with pets. Owners should watch their pets to be sure they do not venture out on to ice covered water. It is also dangerous for children to play on ice covered banks near water where they can slip and slide into the water.

Should you see a person fall through the ice, call 911 immediately. Do not go onto the ice yourself to rescue a person or a pet since you could become a victim. Try to reach the victim by using an outstretched rope, rolled blanket, pole, tree limb, belt or something similar until help arrives. If you do attempt to reach them with one of those items, be sure you are braced to avoid being pulled into the icy water

Avoid walking on ice-covered walkways if possible. Many injuries can result from falls on ice-covered sidewalks, steps, driveways and porches. Use rock salt or sand on walkways to reduce risk of slipping. When walking on ice, take short steps and walk slowly.

Anyone spending time outdoors must dress in several layers of lightweight clothing and wear mittens and a hat - one that covers the ears. Footwear should be water-proof, insulated boots. A wind-resistant outer layer will reduce body-heat loss. Remove extra layers of clothing whenever you feel too warm because excess perspiration will increase heat loss.

Work slowly when performing heavy outdoor chores, such as shoveling snow. Do not ignore shivering - it's the first sign that your body is losing heat.

### Preparing for winter weather travel

Listen for radio or television reports of travel advisories issued by the National Weather Service and do not travel in low visibility conditions. Avoid traveling on ice-covered roads, overpasses, and bridges if at all possible.

If you must travel by car, use tire chains and take a mobile phone with you. Always let someone know your destination and when you expect to arrive, and ask them to notify authorities if you are late. Check and restock the winter emergency supplies in your car before you leave. Never pour water on your windshield to remove ice or snow, because it may shatter.

Don't rely on a car to provide sufficient heat; the car may break down. Therefore, always carry additional warm clothing appropriate for the winter conditions.

### What to do if stranded

Staying in your vehicle is often the safest choice if stranded. These steps will increase your safety:

- Tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna as a signal to rescuers.
- Wrap your entire body, including your head, in extra clothing, blankets, or newspapers.
- Stay awake and keep moving arms and legs. You will be less vulnerable to cold-related health problems.
- Run the motor (and heater) for about 10 minutes per hour, opening one window slightly to let in air. Make sure that snow is not blocking the exhaust pipe - this will reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Do not eat unmelted snow because it will lower your body temperature.
- Huddle with other people for warmth.

A Vehicle Emergency Safety Kit should contain: blankets, cell phone, windshield scraper, snow brush, flashlight, extra winter clothes, shovel, tow chain, matches, traction aid, emergency flares, jumper cables, snacks, water and road maps.

## Form a CERT & Improve Your Community's Safety

A Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a training program to prepare citizens to help themselves, families and neighbors in the event of a disaster.

CERT members receive localized training and participate in drills and exercises. Officials from Currituck Emergency Management and local fire services conduct all training so CERT members are prepared for disaster response.

CERT teams volunteer to work in support of Currituck County officials. Members of CERT teams will help give immediate first aid assistance to victims, provide damage assessment information and organize other volunteers at a disaster site.



A CERT course consists of 21 hours of hands-on training. The course agenda includes:

- Emergency Preparedness
- Fire Safety
- Basic Emergency Medical Operations
- Light Search & Rescue Operations
- CERT organization
- Disaster Psychology
- Terrorism and Cert

To initiate a CERT program in your neighborhood or to learn more of this program, contact Currituck Emergency Management at 232-2115.

## Firewise Community Installs Dry Hydrant

The neighborhood of Point Harbor Beach, already certified as a Firewise Community, had a dry hydrant installed. This dry hydrant will draw water for use by the volunteer fire departments as a resource for fighting fires in the Sound-front neighborhood.



This step is one of many taken by the residents to make their community safer against fires. These included clean-up days to remove brush and overhanging vegetation, and distributing fire safety educational materials in the community.

Point Harbor Beach was designated a Firewise USA Community in 2009. Future action plans include installing uniform reflective address markers at residences and continued removal of vegetation. The residents of Point Harbor worked closely with the Lower Currituck Volunteer Fire Department and Currituck County Forest Ranger Aron Gay to achieve this recognition.

To learn how your community can participate in the Firewise USA Communities program, contact the Currituck County Forest Service office at 453-6770.

# Currituck 4-H Youth are Hungry to Help



On December 4, youth in Currituck County will begin collecting food for hungry citizens by sponsoring the Winter Wondercan food drive in conjunction with the Annual Extension Holiday Festival & Christmas Parade.

Local residents are asked to bring either a canned non-perishable food item or small monetary donation to contribute to the local food bank.

We've all heard the old adage, "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." Well, it's true – nutritious food is good medicine. Food is one of our most basic needs. Along

with oxygen, water, and shelter, it is necessary for human survival. In a nation as affluent as the United States, no child should go hungry. Yet everyday hunger disrupts the lives of 1 in 5 children in North Carolina.

In May 2009, Feeding America released the results of its first analysis of food insecurity in early childhood, "Child Food Insecurity in the United States: 2005 - 2007." North Carolina ranked second worst in the nation with 24.1 percent of its children under 5 judged to be food insecure and lacking regular access to nutritional food. The state was 10th worst in the same Feeding America study of food insecurity in children 0-18 years old.

To combat hunger the NC 4-H Youth Development program and the Food Banks of North Carolina, all of which are affiliates of Feeding America, our nation's

largest hunger-relief organization, have teamed up on a new initiative entitled Hungry to Help.

The Hungry to Help initiative endeavors to reduce hunger and address food insecurity by

- Collecting food, money and resources,
- Fostering volunteer involvement,
- Enhancing awareness and increasing knowledge of hunger and food insecurity solutions.

To request more information or to learn how you can participate, please contact:

Ellen Owens  
232-2262  
ellen\_owens@ncsu.edu

## 4-H Hosts Political Meet & Greet

The Currituck County 4-H Department, in correlation with the Government is Us Program for youth, sponsored its first annual 4-H Political Candidate Meet & Greet on October 26.

A total of 19 candidates running for the local Board of Commissioners, School Board, Clerk of Superior Court and Senate and House of Representative from District 1 were in attendance. The forum was held at the Currituck County Cooperative Extension Center, located in Barco.

Teens and adults were given the opportunity to ask questions of candidates related to issues affecting the youth of Currituck County. The Government is Us program has been operating since last spring with 12 middle and high school students.

These students meet to learn about citizenship, how county

government operates and discuss issues and how issues are dealt with on the local level. The candidate forum was an opportunity for youth to view politics in an up-close and personal manner.

4-H in North Carolina sponsors many citizenship opportunities for teens such as Citizenship NC Focus, which is held each summer in Raleigh. Through such events, young 4-H'ers are being equipped to serve as civically responsible adults who are involved in the democratic process. Teens are given the opportunity to meet legislators to discuss relevant issues. 4-H Citizenship projects help shed light on the way our government works for young people.

This is one of the core missions of 4-H: to develop citizenship and leadership in young people.

## Remember Safety with Christmas Trees & Light Decorations



Although decorated Christmas trees and strings of lights can fill a home with festive holiday spirit, these items also pose a very real fire danger to any household.

Christmas tree fires are not common, but when they occur they can be very

serious. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports that U.S. fire departments respond to an average of 250 home fires started with Christmas trees each year. In most instances, the fire starts at the tree and spreads quickly.

Likewise, fires caused by decorative lights are not common, but can cause fires resulting in significant property damage. The NFPA reports an average of 170 home fires per year caused by holiday or decorative lights.

There are several factors to keep in mind when selecting, decorating and lighting Christmas trees. By paying attention to these details, you can greatly decrease your risk of fire.

### Selecting the tree

- If you have an artificial tree, be sure it is certified, or identified by the manufacturer as fire retardant.
- Choose a tree with fresh, green needles that do not fall off when touched.

### Placing the tree

- Before placing the tree in the stand, cut 1-2" from the base of the trunk.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, such as fireplaces, radiators, candles, heat vents or lights.
- Make sure the tree is not blocking an exit.
- Add water to the tree stand. Be sure to add water daily.

### Lighting the tree

- Use lights that have the label of an independent testing laboratory. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.
- Replace any string of lights with worn or broken cords or loose bulb connections.
- Connect no more than three strands of mini string sets and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- Never use lit candles to decorate the tree.
- Always turn off Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.

### After Christmas

- Get rid of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are a fire danger.
- Recycle trees through the local recycling program.
- Take down all exterior lights.

## Improved Rural Center Open Once Again

After being closed for a short while for site improvements, the Currituck Rural Center reopened to the public on Monday, November 8. All county residents are invited to enjoy this beautiful park that welcomes equestrians, dog enthusiasts and fisherman. Regular park hours are 8 a.m. to sunset.

For the equestrian, the park has two outdoor arenas and one indoor arena. There is a covered arena for horseback riding that is open from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Note: Reservations are needed for after-hours.

Fishing is available in the two stocked fishing ponds. There is also a 1500' bulkhead leading to the sound and fish are abundant. Please come and enjoy a day of fishing. The Rural Center is also a dog friendly park, so feel free to bring your faithful companion.



Recent improvements include a new, wider entry road off Milburn Sawyer Rd. This provides better access for visitors, especially those with horse trailers. Other improvements include additional outdoor lighting throughout the park, electrical and water line expansion, public restroom facility and office building.

The facility is located in Spot, NC off North Spot Road. The Rural Center is maintained for the education, cultural and recreational enrichment of the public and for the benefit of the citizens and visitors of Currituck County.

This park and amenities can be rented to host your own event. Check out the parks event and promotion information at [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com), or call the Cooperative Extension office at 232-2262.

# News & Events from the Currituck Public Library

## New Reader Advisory Service

Have you read everything by your favorite authors and don't know who to try next? The Barco library is offering readers a new service to help you find your next favorite author.

After filling out a questionnaire and describes your reading interests and participating in a brief interview, you will receive a customized reading list and a subscription to our monthly reader's newsletter.

If you would like to participate you can call Patsy or Vicky at 453-8345 or email us at [phoward@earlibrary.org](mailto:phoward@earlibrary.org) or [vhagemeister@earlibrary.org](mailto:vhagemeister@earlibrary.org).



## Barco Library community outreach - Monthly book delivery available

Daycare centers Delivery consists of: Pre-selected picture books geared towards preschool age children, board books for babies and themed kits are also available. All centers must be certified with a minimum enrollment of five children.

Home Visits This service is available to home bound seniors, residing in mainland Currituck County, who are no longer able to drive and therefore have no access to the library. Books are chosen based on a preferred genre or list of favorite authors.

For scheduling and enrollment in this monthly service, please contact April at 453-8345.

## Barco Library "Make it & Take it" workshop

Saturday, December 4, 2010  
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Enjoy making several crafts for the holiday season & face painting for the young at heart.

Please bring Toys for Tots or Food Bank Items

## Barco Library - Toddler Time

18 mo - 2 yrs.  
Tuesday's at 10:00 a.m.  
January 11-18-25  
February 1-8-15-22  
March 1-8-15-22-29  
April 5-12-26  
May 10-17

## Mother Goose for babies

Birth-17 Mo.  
Wednesday's at 10:00 a.m.  
January 12-19-26  
February 2-9-16-23  
March 2-9-23-30  
April 6-13-27  
May 4-11-18

## Storytime for preschoolers age 4-5 years old

Wednesday's at 11:00 a.m.  
January 12-19-26  
February 2-9-16-23  
March 2-9-23-30  
April 6-13-27  
May 4-11-18

## Storytime for 3 year olds

Thursday's at 10:00 a.m.  
January 13-20-27  
February 3-10-17-24  
March 3-10-17-24-31  
April 7-14-28  
May 5-12-19

## Genealogy One-On-One

The Barco Library is offering one hour sessions to individuals who would like help with their genealogy.

We can help you get started, help with internet sites and give you suggestions on where to look for your ancestors.

One hour sessions are available on Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. Call the library at 453-8345 to schedule your appointment.

## "Make it & Take it" workshop at Moyock Library

Make several Christmas ornaments to take home for the holidays. Saturday, December 11, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon. All ages welcome. Program is free, but we ask that you bring in a non-perishable food item for the food pantry on the day of the workshop.

## Family films at the Moyock Library

A family suitable film will be shown on the first Saturday of each month (the second Saturday in the event of a holiday) at 2:30 p.m. Free for all ages.

## Storytime at the Moyock Library

Preschool storytime on Tuesdays. First class begins Tuesday, January 18 at 10:00 a.m. Class will run through May 10. Open for ages 4-5 years. Registration is required.

Three's storytime on Wednesdays. First class begins Wednesday, January 19 at 10:00 a.m. Class will run through May 11. Open for all 3 year olds. Registration is required.

Family storytime on Wednesdays. First class begins Wednesday, January 19 at 11:00 a.m. Class will run through May 11. Open for all ages. No registration is required.

Toddler storytime on Thursdays. First class begins Thursday, January 20 at 10:00 a.m. Class will run through May 12. Open for ages 18 mos. - 3 years. Registration required.

Storytime registration begins in December. All classes are free, but have limited space. Please call 435-6419 or stop by the library for more information or to register.

**The Barco Library is a drop-off point for Toys For Tots. The deadline for donations is December 15.**

## Social Services Recruiting Foster Families

Are you willing to open your home and your heart to help a child as a foster parent?

Currently, there are 27 children in foster care within Currituck County. There are over 8,700 children in foster care across our state. Some of these children will be able to return home to their families, while others will need permanent adoptive homes.

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is recruiting foster and adoptive families. DSS will offer the next training for new foster and adoptive parents in spring 2011.

If you are interested in more information please call DSS at 232-3083 and ask for Carolyn Eason or Judith Ayers. You can also go online to [www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/fostercare/](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dss/fostercare/) to get general information on how foster care works.

Also, if you would like for us to do a presentation for a community or church group please let us know!

## What is Foster Care?

Foster care is a temporary living arrangement for abused, neglected and dependent children who need a safe place to live when their parents or caretakers cannot take care of them.

## What foster parents do:

- Provide basic necessities
- Encourage positive relationships
- Protect the child
- Discipline in a positive way
- Help the child to grow
- Work as part of a team
- Help support and prepare the child for their future

## Children available for foster care and adoption are children separated from their parents because of:

- Physical or sexual abuse
- Neglect or abandonment
- Physical or mental illness of a parent
- Death of parents
- Child's emotional or behavioral problems
- Children from all backgrounds
- Children with specific needs

## General requirements for foster parenting and/or adoption in Currituck County:

- Be a resident of Currituck County
- Attend a 30-hour training course
- Be at least 21 years old
- Have a stable income
- Be in good physical and mental health
- Have the ability to provide good physical, emotional and spiritual care
- Have a stable family relationship
- Have enough room for a child
- Have a telephone
- Be fingerprinted and have a criminal records check completed
- Have a home study completed

## Who can adopt or become a foster parent:

- People who are single, married, divorced or widowed
- People who have children and people who don't
- People with high and low incomes
- People who did or did not finish school
- People who own their home or rent

Call the Department of Social Services to learn more at 232-3083.

## Parks & Recreation Announcements

### Yoga Class

Parks and Recreation will be offering a Yoga Class in January and February 2011. The class will include eight sessions and meet Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. at the Currituck Senior Center. A \$25 fee is required, and participants will need an exercise mat, yoga strap and blocks.

Register at the Parks and Rec office, or online at [www.currituckgovernment.com](http://www.currituckgovernment.com). Call 232-3007 for more information.

### Youth Baseball/Softball/T/Ball

Registration will begin on February 7, 2011 until March 5, 2011. An on-site registration will be held at the Currituck Parks and Rec building.

### Spring Soccer

Registration for Spring Soccer will begin in January, 2011 and will be accepted until January 29, 2011. An on-site registration will be held from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on January 29, 2011 at the Currituck Parks and Recreation building. For additional info contact 232-3007.

## Senior Center Announcements

### Seeking Bridge Players

The Currituck Senior Center is looking for Bridge players to play Bridge on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please call Diane Bray at 232-3505 for information.

### Blood Glucose Screening

The Currituck Senior Center is offering a Health Screening to check blood pressure, glucose, BMI and total cholesterol on February 24, 2011 from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. Call 232-3505 to register.

### Meal Delivery Volunteers Needed

Currituck Senior Center is in need for volunteers to deliver meals in the Currituck and Moyock areas.

If you can give one hour of your time one day a week to deliver a meal to a senior please call Beth O'Shields at 232-3505 for the Currituck route and Stacy Joseph for the Moyock route at 232-3505.

## Community Events Listing Now Available On County Site

[CurrituckGovernment.com](http://CurrituckGovernment.com) will post community events in the website's calendar section. These listings are for events hosted by non-profit organizations.

To have your event posted, fill out the online information page on the website's calendar page. For questions or more information, send an email to [contactus@currituckcountync.gov](mailto:contactus@currituckcountync.gov).

# Government Contracting Seminar

hosted by Currituck County Economic Development

## Wednesday, December 8th

### 9 am - 12 pm

Cooperative Extension Center Auditorium, 120 Community Way, Barco

All Currituck Businesses are encouraged to attend this FREE Seminar. Lunch will be provided

Please join us for an informational seminar on **how to grow your business through government contracting** with the County, State and Federal government.

The purpose of the seminar is to engage the Currituck business community with opportunities to do business with government by:

- Providing a summary on the **multi-billion dollar business** of government procurement
- Presentations from **multiple resource agencies** supporting NC businesses who engage in government procurement
- Learning the basics of **eligibility** and how to find opportunities
- Introducing the new **ThinkCurrituck.com** County Bid Opportunities Page

Participating agencies include the North Carolina Small Business & Technology Development Center's (SBTDC) Procurement Technical Assistance Center, the North Carolina Military Business Center, the Currituck County Finance office, Currituck County Schools, the North Carolina Department of Commerce and more.

This event is Free of Charge and all Currituck County businesses are encouraged to attend. A networking lunch will be provided for all participants immediately following the event.



RSVP TO:

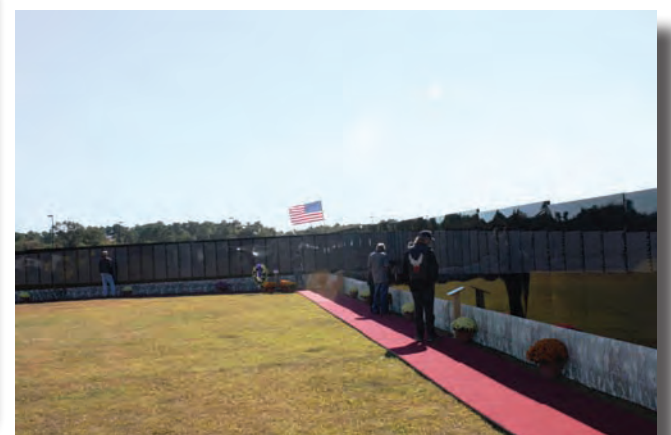
Peter F. Bishop, Director  
153 Courthouse Road, Currituck, North Carolina 27929  
P: 252-232-6015 | F: 252-232-3551  
[pbishop@thinkcurrituck.com](mailto:pbishop@thinkcurrituck.com)  
[www.thinkeurrituck.com](http://www.thinkeurrituck.com)

**CURRITUCK**  
North Carolina  
Economic Development

## Moving Wall Brought Beautiful Tribute to Currituck

In October, residents and visitors in Currituck County were able to pay their respects to the United State's Vietnam War veterans without traveling to a distant monument.

The Moving Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., was on display at Sound Park in Harbinger. This exhibit was a smaller version of the real monument and contained all names found on the original as well. Small signs posted in front of the wall highlighted the names of soldiers with local ties.



## POSTAL PATRON

Currituck County is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in all programs and services, and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, creed, ancestry, disability or veteran status.

### **3rd Annual Holiday Festival to Feature Parade & Tree-Lighting**

The Currituck Extension and Community Association will sponsor the 3rd Annual Holiday Festival on Saturday, December 4, 2010 at the Currituck County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension. The Extension facility is located at 120 Community Way in Barco, next to Central Elementary School.

The festival will begin at 9:00 am with a pancake breakfast and lots of fun activities for the family to enjoy. These will include craft booths, youth activities and vendor booths.

At 10:00 a.m., the Currituck Extension and Community Association, in conjunction with the Currituck County Sheriff's Department and the Currituck County Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #89, will sponsor the 19th Annual Christmas Parade.



The parade will travel south down Airport road towards Hwy. 158. At this point the parade will turn east bound on Hwy. 158/ Shortcut road. The parade will then turn north on Aviation Parkway and finish at the Currituck Extension Center.

At the conclusion of the parade, please join us inside the Extension facility for the Holiday Festival. A highlight of the festival will be the 57th Annual Tree Lighting. Visitors will also enjoy visit with Santa and more fun!

The rain date for these events will be Saturday, December 11, 2010. If you would like to participate in the parade or set up a craft booth, youth activity, etc. or need more information, contact Sheila Gregory at 232-2261 or email at [sheila\\_gregory@ncsu.edu](mailto:sheila_gregory@ncsu.edu), or Detective James Midgett at 207-2740.

**Find updated news, events, information and department contacts on:**

[www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com)  
&  
[www.VisitCurrituck.com](http://www.VisitCurrituck.com)

**Follow Currituck County government on:**



Currituck County Board of Commissioners

Vance Aydlett  
Owen Etheridge  
Marion Gilbert  
Paul Martin

Paul O'Neal  
H.M. 'Butch' Petrey  
John Rorer

Public Information Resources

- Currituck County government website, [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com)
- "eGoose" free email newsletter - Register on county website
- Mediacom Ch. 18, Charter Ch. 19, Cox Ch. 46
- Twitter, Facebook, YouTube

Contact the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners at 232-2075.  
Find meeting schedules and agendas at [www.CurrituckGovernment.com](http://www.CurrituckGovernment.com).

Focus on Currituck is designed and produced by the Information & Communications Officer.  
Call 232-0719 for comments, questions or additional copies.