



# *Employee Newsletter*

## *December 2017*

### *Have a Blessed Holiday Season!*



### **DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**

Kamie Friedrich	1
Anthony Mariano	1
Sara Wilson	4
David Fairlie	5
Jeremy Bresch	6
Judy Jackson	6
Scottie Queen	7
Sharon Moss	8
Rebecca Hand	10
Ray Warmuth	10
Cathy Hurt	12
Bebeie McClure	12
Heath Woodard	12
Sheri Goodlet	13
Greg Shields	13
Shereen Bates	15
Kala Headley	18
Jordan Israel	19
Keith Ownbey	20
Michael Kernea	21
Karen Wright	21
Kathy Adams	22
Bobby Blair	22
Katherine Hall	22
TJ Major	23
Wanda Stalcup	23
Eva Glosson	24
Ashley Gunter	26
Lis Nantz	26
Eddie Allen	28
Sue Chastain	29
Harold Chastain	30
Kevin Luther	30

Ages 22 to 72

#### **Commissioner Board Meetings**

**Dec 4 @ 6:30 pm**  
**Dec 18 @ 6:30 pm**

#### **INSURANCE DEDUCTIBLE YEAR**

Just a quick reminder—the deductible year for our health, dental and vision insurance runs **July 1 to June 30**—not January to December. Keep that in mind, especially when you are scheduling dental work since there is a \$1000 plan year limit on dental benefits. And **to clarify the \$1000 plan year limit**, the cost of your two free cleanings (no cost to you) counts toward the \$1000 maximum per year. For example, if your dentist charged \$200 for each of your 2 cleanings, that would leave you \$600 additional to spend (\$1000 - \$400) on dental services for that plan year. So if you have scheduled dental work in January thinking it will be covered and you are close to your \$1000 max, you will probably want to re-schedule the work to July if you can wait. Also a reminder that we do not have a dental network. You may use the dental provider of your choice until your \$1000 plan year maximum is exhausted.

***Congratulations to WC King, the fire marshal, who is retiring January 1st after 22 years of service this time. He had twelve years from a prior service—so a total of 34 years!***

***Also, congratulations to Allen Williams at the jail who is retiring after almost 13 years of service.***

***We wish both of you the best as you enter this new phase of your lives!!!!***

#### 2018 Holiday Schedule

New Year's Day	Jan 1	Monday
MLK, Jr, BD	Jan 15	Monday
Good Friday	Mar 30	Friday
Memorial Day	May 28	Monday
Independence Day	July 4	Wednesday
Labor Day	Sept 3	Monday
Veteran's Day	Nov 12	Monday
Thanksgiving	Nov 22 & 23	Thursday & Friday
Christmas	Dec. 24,25,26	Monday Tuesday Wednesday

#### **PLEASE CHECK YOUR INFORMATION!!**

When you receive your direct deposit notice or pay check next pay day, please check to make sure your name is spelled correctly and that your mailing address is correct. If it is not, please let me know as soon as possible so I can get corrections made before the end of the year. We only have three more pay periods before it will be time to do W2s for 2017. They will be emailed to those who have given permission to email those. I hope to have them to you sometime early in January but not sure what date yet.

Also, please go to MUNIS Self Service and check to make sure your personal information is correct. If you have never logged in, you go to the county website, click departments, employee information, and then click Munis Self Service Your user name is first initial, last name, last four of social (ex. jdoexxxx). The password, if you have never logged in before, is the last four of your social and must be changed. If your phone number is incorrect please correct it or if you have a cell number to add, please do so. And if you don't have anybody listed under emergency contact please enter the person who should be contacted if something were to happen to you. You can also look at your pay information, your tax information, retrieve prior year W2s, run a pay simulator and see lots of documents on this site. Please take advantage of this resource—you can find almost any kind of payroll or benefit form there. Forms are found by clicking the word "resources" below your name in the upper right hand corner. If you don't remember your password, the password help portion appears to be working now, so everybody should be able to get into the site.

If you would like something published in the county's monthly newsletter please send info. to Melody in human resources at melody.johnson@cherokeecounty-nc.gov, or call ext 816..

## TIPS FOR BUYING SAFE TOYS AND GIFTS

The holiday season is upon us and, for some, it means the stress and anxiety of battling last-minute crowds at the mall, frantically cleaning for visiting in-laws and agonizing over preparing the perfect holiday meal.

But not you -- you are a holiday planning superstar, and your perfectly planned holiday checklist has been finished for weeks. Your halls are decked, your stockings are hung by the chimney with care and all of your gifts follow the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's recommendations for safe toys and gifts.

Wait, you haven't done the last one? Maybe you're not the holiday planning superstar you think you are, or maybe you aren't aware of the serious risks involved in giving unsafe holiday toys and gifts. In 2007, the Consumer Product Safety Commission reported 18 toy-related deaths and an estimated 170,100 hospital emergency-room treated injuries to children under 15.

Although these consequences are real, prevention is as simple as following a few safety guidelines when shopping for the perfect holiday gift.



The CPSC recommends the following toy safety shopping tips:

### Under 3 years old

- Children under 3 tend to put everything in their mouths. Avoid buying toys intended for older children that may have small parts that pose a choking danger.
- Never let children of any age play with deflated or broken balloons because of the choking danger.
- Avoid marbles, balls and games with balls that have a diameter of 1.75 inches or less. These products also pose a choking hazard to young children.
- Children at this age pull, prod and twist toys. Look for toys that are well-made with tightly secured eyes, noses and other parts.
- Avoid toys that have sharp edges and points.

### Ages 3 to 5

- Avoid toys that are constructed with thin, brittle plastic that might easily break into small pieces or leave jagged edges.
- Look for household art materials, including crayons and paint sets, marked with the designation "ASTM D-4236." This means the product has been reviewed for chronic health hazards and, if necessary, the product has been labeled with cautionary information.
- Teach older children to keep their toys away from their younger brothers and sisters.

### Ages 6-12

- For all children, adults should check toys periodically for breakage and potential hazards. Damaged or dangerous toys should be repaired or thrown away.
- If buying a toy gun, be sure the barrel, or the entire gun, is brightly colored so that it's not mistaken for a real gun.
- If you buy a bicycle for any age child, buy a helmet, too, and make sure the child wears it.
- Teach all children to put toys away when they're finished playing so they don't trip over them or fall on them.

It is also important to read all labels carefully. The CPSC requires toy manufacturers to meet stringent safety standards and to label certain toys that could be a hazard for younger children.

Look for labels that give age recommendations and use that information as a guide. Labels on toys that state "not recommended for children under 3 ... contains small parts," are labeled that way because they may pose a choking hazard to children under 3. Toys should be developmentally appropriate to suit the skills, abilities and interests of the child.

The CPSC oversees the safety of toys and many other consumer products. For more information about purchasing safe toys and gifts, call the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Toll-Free Hot Line, 1-800-638-2772.

## AirMedCare

County employees are being offered an opportunity to participate in the AirMedCare membership program. An email with an enrollment form and information about this was sent out on November 21st at around 11:40. The deductions for this will begin with the January 12, 2018, pay day and will end on March 23rd, 2018.

Please note that any family members who are enrolled in the Medicaid program are not eligible for the benefit, but if they should lose their eligibility, they could be added as a family member at that time.

Costs for the membership are below:

1 year	\$50	2 deductions of \$25 each
3 year	\$150	6 deductions of \$25 each
5 year	\$250	6 deductions of \$41.67 each
10 year	\$500	6 deductions of \$83.34 each

Right now, the schedule looks like this:

Tuesday, Nov. 28	5-8 pm	Dispatch, Sheriff and Jail
Wednesday, Nov 29	11-12 am	Landfill
	1-4 pm	DSS
	5-8 pm	Dispatch, Sheriff and Jail
Thursday, Nov 30	1-4 pm	DSS
Friday, December 1	1-4 pm	Health Dept and Transit
Monday, December 4	10-12 am	Courthouse and 59 Hiawasse St.
Tuesday, December 5	8-10 am	Courthouse (Co Mgr. Conf room)
Wed, December 6	8-10 am	Courthouse (Co Mgr. Conf room)



**LifeForce is one of several providers covered by your membership. See brochure at enrollment for full list of carriers covered.**

Shane Headrick, the AirMedCare Rep, is going to try to drop by EMS stations, Andrews Senior, Recreation and HD and the Hiwassee Dam Senior Center. If you prefer to go to a location other than your own work site, that is fine, too. We wanted to give everybody an opportunity to enroll. If you can't make any of the locations, you may complete the enrollment form that was emailed on the 21st and give it to the person in your department that delivers invoices and deposits to the Courthouse and they can be submitted that way. The 5th and 6th of December will be kind of catch-all days for anybody who missed him at one of the other locations. He will be in the Conference Room in the County Manager's suite on the three Courthouse days and any in-town employees should come on one of those days with the exception of the Health Department and Transit.

Note that in order to do payroll deduction, you must be an employee that gets paid **every pay day**. If you are PRN and just work occasionally or don't work every pay period, you may still join but you would need to pay up front and your cost would be \$55 per year (the instead of \$50, but still a good deal even at that. I know a few people have already done that.

As we were putting out cookies for Santa on Christmas Eve, I accidentally dropped one. "No problem," I said, picking it up and dusting it off before placing it back on the plate.

"You can't do that," argued my four-year-old.

"Don't worry. Santa will never know."

He shot me a look. "So he knows if I've been bad or good, but he doesn't know the cookie fell on the floor?"

Shortly before Christmas, a business man was anxious to get home. The business trip had been grueling and he was not in a particularly good mood. The airport loudspeakers blared Christmas carols he was sick of hearing. He thought their decorations were tacky. The worst decoration, he thought, was the plastic mistletoe hung over the luggage scale.

Being in a grumpy mood, he said to the woman at the counter, "You know, even if I weren't married, I wouldn't kiss you."

"That's not what it's there for," said the attendant. "It's so you can kiss your luggage goodbye."

Q: What do snowmen eat for breakfast?

A: Snowflakes.

Q: How do sheep in Mexico say Merry Christmas?

A: Fleece Navidad!

Q: What do elves learn in school?

A: The Elf-abet!

"By the time you make ends meet, they move the ends."

WHEN YOU TALK, YOU ARE ONLY REPEATING WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW. BUT IF YOU LISTEN, YOU MAY LEARN SOMETHING NEW.

DALAI LAMA



and collective EVOLUTION

Those who say it can't be done should not interrupt the ones doing it.

runningthroughlife.com

IF IT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, YOU WILL FIND A WAY. IF NOT, YOU WILL FIND AN EXCUSE.

InspirationalQuotesGazette.com

Be careful with your words, They can only be forgiven, Not forgotten.

If we could look into each other's hearts and understand the unique challenges each of us faces, I think we would treat each other much more gently, with more love, patience, tolerance, and care.



EmbracingQuotes.com

-Marvin J. Ashton

CHARACTER IS HOW YOU TREAT THOSE WHO CAN DO NOTHING FOR YOU.



NEVER REGRET ANYTHING BECAUSE AT ONE TIME IT WAS EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANTED.

Judging a person does not define who they are. It defines who you are.

Peace.

It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. It means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart.

- Unknown

I don't regret the things I've done, I regret the things I didn't do when I had the chance.

- Unknown

www.wallmild.com

We often add to our pain and suffering by being overly sensitive, over-reacting to minor things, and sometimes taking things too personally.

-Dalai Lama



DON'T WAIT. LIFE GOES FASTER THAN YOU THINK.

KICKSTARTYOURDREAMS.COM

when someone YOU LOVE BECOMES A MEMORY THE MEMORY BECOMES A treasure

Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory. - Dr Suess