



Pender County Government Update

Department

VETERANS SERVICES

Wednesday, March 23rd – Sally Lawson met with **Teresa Mobley-Prevention Specialist with Coastal Horizons** concerning Crisis Resources for Pender Co. Below is a picture of business cards we have in both offices for our Veterans and Dependents. **Coastal Horizon Center** is located behind Pender Co. Health Department in Burgaw on 309 Progress Drive Burgaw, NC 28425 and can be reached at **910-259-0668**.

Saturday, March 26th Sally Lawson attended **American Legion Auxiliary Division 1** meeting at **Hampstead Post 167** with other Auxiliary members across the state of NC. This was our first Division Meeting for our post. We raised \$1,005.00 for **Mechanical Pets** to give to **Veterans with PTSD and Alzheimer's** for our local **NC VA Medical Centers and Veterans Homes**.

Monday, March 28th **American Legion Auxiliary Post 167** hosted **Spaghetti Dinner & Petty Zoo** from 4:00pm-7:00pm. Below is a picture of **Buttercup with OT Martin, Trustee of AL Post 167**.

Reminder every **Wednesday from 12-2** the ALA Ladies meet for Crafts Day, Quilting etc. for more info call **Patricia Martin, Division 1 President/ Vice President Hampstead Unite 167 @ 910-617-1454**.

3.29.2022 Pender Co. VSOs attended virtual meeting for updates. Winston-Salem VARO and Out-based Location are now open for Virtual (phone) or in-person Appointments. They have implemented website for Visitor Engagement Reporting Application (VERA) can be reached by QR Code or [force.com](https://www.force.com) to schedule phone or in-person appointments.

3.30.2022 update from Jacksonville Vet Center earlier this week we finalized a landmark agreement with **Cape Fear Community College** to begin Providing **Vet Center services** through establishment of a **Community Access Point** at the college. We are also presently working with **UNCW** to establish and agreement along those same lines. **Community Access Points** are centered primarily around a group format with some limited individual session availability, and full access to programming at the **Jacksonville Vet Center**, both in person and virtually. Tentative start date at **CFCC will be Thursday 07 April 2022**. Appointments are recommended for new clients due to initial registration, but not absolutely necessary, if you know of anyone in need of **Readjustment Counseling**, please have them Call **910-577-1100** and we can help them get to where they want/need to be.

Marine Corps League Det. 1321 Hampstead

Next meeting will be **April 12th @ 7pm** at the Topsail Senior Center 20959 US HWY 17 Hampstead, NC 28443. If you have further questions call **Frank Wood @ 410-279-1095 or email: commandant1321mcl@gmail.com**

Please call or email if you plan to attend as they need a headcount for the meeting as this is their "Pizza Night" meeting.

Breaking News from Department of Veterans Affairs

VA will propose adding **9 rare cancers** to the presumed service-connected list as related to military environmental exposure in addition to the 3 presumptive conditions that were previously listed in May 2021.

Those conditions release in **May of 2021** were: **asthmas, rhinitis and sinusitis**.

The new presumptive conditions listed are cause by FPM exposure (Fine Particulate Matter). Veterans presumed to have been exposed to FPM if they served in:

SW Asia Theater of Operations from 8.2.1990 to present

Afghanistan, Djibouti, Syria, or Uzbekistan from 9.19.2001 to present.

The 9 rare respiratory cancers are listed as the following:

Squamous Cell Carcinoma of the larynx

Squamous cell carcinoma of the trachea

Adenocarcinoma of the trachea

Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung

Large Cell Carcinoma of the lung

Salivary gland-type tumors of the lung

Sarcomatoid carcinoma of the lung

Typical and atypical carcinoid of the lung

If you have a clinical diagnosis for these conditions call your local Veterans Service Office at **910-259-1203 Burgaw** or **910-270-5005 Hampstead** for appointment to file claim or reopen previously denied claims along with the medical evidence.



Pender County Crisis Resources

IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING A MEDICAL EMERGENCY PLEASE CALL 911

Emergency Crisis Phone Numbers

Experiencing a mental health or substance misuse crisis?
Please call one of the numbers below for immediate assistance.

Mobile Crisis.....1.866.437.1821

Mental health or substance misuse issues, or developmental disabilities.

RHA Behavioral Health.....1.844.709.4097

Intensive, on-site response, stabilization and intervention for all ages
experiencing a crisis due to mental health disturbances, developmental
disabilities, or addiction.

Pender County Crisis Resources

Non Emergency Phone Numbers

Coastal Horizons Center.....910-259-0668

Coastal Horizons Center After Hours.....910-685-0205

Trillium.....1-877-685-2415

RHA Behavioral Services.....1-800-848-0180











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UTILITY OPERATIONS

PENDER COUNTY UTILITIES (PCU) & WATER DISTRICTS:

The Scotts Hill Elevated Tank & Wells project is out for bids, with a bid date of May 3rd at 10am at PCU offices. We will also have a virtual pre-bid conference on April 12th at 10am.

We currently have 4 job openings for Water/Sewer Maintenance Technician, Meter Reader, Project Manager-Utilities, and Solid Waste Maintenance Technician. I am hopeful to make an offer for the SWMT within the next week. Interviews for the other positions will be later this month.

The Factory Road Water Extension construction is complete, but the contractor is searching for a small leak right now. Hopefully the pipeline will go online within the next couple of weeks.

Field staff work and status updates since last report:

- Lots of inspections of new subdivisions have been performed over the last couple of weeks.
- In-house training of newly promoted staff has been ongoing.
- The large dump truck repairs were finally completed, so we are working on hauling rock to the transfer station and other sites as needed.

WATER PRODUCTION NUMBERS:

December 2021 Daily Avg: 1.31 MGD from WP, 0.202 MGD from Wallace, 0.752 MGD to Hamp/SH (thru 210 BPS), 0.094 MGD from Annex & Kiwanis Wells (Total 0.846 MGD for Hamp/SH)

January 2022 Daily Avg: 1.31 MGD from WP, 0.258 MGD from Wallace, 0.838 MGD to Hamp/SH (thru 210 BPS), 0.007 MGD from Annex & Kiwanis Wells (Total 0.845 MGD for Hamp/SH)

February 2022 Daily Avg: 1.22 MGD from WP, 0.269 MGD from Wallace, 0.783 MGD to Hamp/SH (thru 210 BPS), 0.018 MGD from Annex & Kiwanis Wells (Total 0.801 MGD for Hamp/SH)

March 2022 Daily Avg (thru 30th): 1.32 MGD from WP, 0.223 MGD from Wallace, 0.835 MGD to Hamp/SH (thru 210 BPS), 0.007 MGD from Annex & Kiwanis Wells (Total 0.843 MGD for Hamp/SH)

MAPLE HILL WATER SYSTEM & WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

This week we were able to disconnect from the Chinquapin water system, and start receiving all water from ONWASA. The automatic valve has been installed, but we are still awaiting completion of the electrical controls. We are operating the interconnection manually until the electrical connections and setup are completed. At the WWTP, we are coordinating with contractors to mow the ditch and other difficult areas, and are having repairs done to our gear drive chain in the main treatment basin. We are also working on repairs to the plant flow meter.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT

Backwashed GAC #3 (GAC backwash flow into pond pictured). Repaired door to the High Service Pump Room. Installed new controller and repaired finished water turbidimeter.

Operator Erin completed B-Surface school.

Raw water quality has not been great, coagulant dose has been 140mg/L for the past two weeks. Staff ran multiple jar tests and ferric dose is back down to the usual 90 mg/L as of March 30th.

Water production numbers for March through the 30th: 39.7 million gallons for an average of 1.32 MGD

PCP WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT - MKKAES (Melinda K. Knoezer Adaptive Ecosystem)

Staff has been extremely busy responding to a plant upset over the last month. It is believed that the upset was the result of some outside wastewater flow we recently accepted for treatment, which over time overwhelmed the plant with an unhealthy bacterium.

Our plant is usually very efficient at consuming ammonia. Normally when we see Ammonia numbers start to grow in the clarifier, we would do one extra wasting and the number would drop overnight but this month it has been a very different story. We tried extra wasting when we saw this number start to climb. This time that didn't work. On March 2 we tried bringing some sludge back from the digester to reseed our bugs/bacteria. On March 3 we did see a decrease. We pulled samples extra samples that Friday and Saturday just to monitor, fully expecting we had fixed the problem. At this point all the other plant numbers looked great.

On March 7th everything seemed normal but the next day when we got the testing result it was alarming. We made phone calls to our customers asking if they had changed cleaning products or methods. Our answer from all of them was no. We also noticed that the maggots in our headworks dumpster were all dead. Sampling daily, we thought we would start seeing numbers drop after the second day. Since all the other number looked good, we still thought ammonia weekly average would be good if we kept pulling over the weekend. By Friday we were skeptical so I call DEQ to let them know that we may not meet our weekly average. We missed it by 0.19, but not by a lack of trying. On Monday March 14th I sent them an email letting them know.

On third week we started made a plan to start up our second clarifier, thinking that the ammonia might be coming from algae. Our ammonia was getting converted in the MBBR but coming back up in the clarifier. We started getting ready to wash down the clarifier before putting it online. This pretty much filled our digesters. On Friday we turned the air off to one the digesters so we could decant the next week.

On the March 21st we saw elevated foaming that we spent time knocking back with the hoses, but the clarifier did not look really bad until the next morning. This is when it appeared that the sludge blanket was starting to stratify. At the time we didn't know what was going on. We increased our return rate and continued to spray down the foam. Our disc filters were in a state of almost constant backwash. We started decanting the digester so that we could waste more. By the night of the 27th we were able to start filling the second clarifier. As the clarifier filled, we slowed the plant down and again increased the return. We did not discharge on the 28th and by the 30th we now have a good handle on the foaming. Sludge is settling like it should and all of today's onsite lab numbers are all in range. We will not get BOD numbers back for a couple of weeks. We are working on hauling sludge out of the plant and we will continue to fight back the filamentous bacteria. At this point I believe we are back to normal operation.

SOLID WASTE

- The Transfer Station scale house is operating well.
- The ladies are taking precautions and staying healthy.
- Waiting time at scales is still about 3 minutes in and 4 minutes out.
- Traffic through the scale will continue to increase as we move into warmer weather

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL TONNAGE FOR FEBRUARY 2022

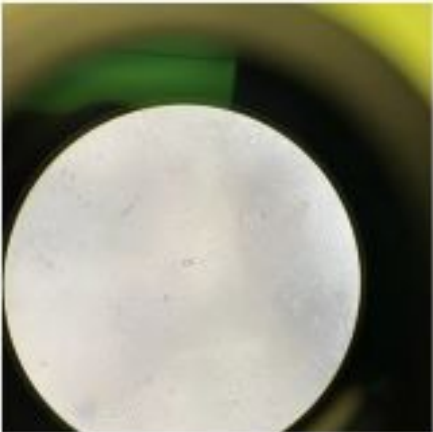
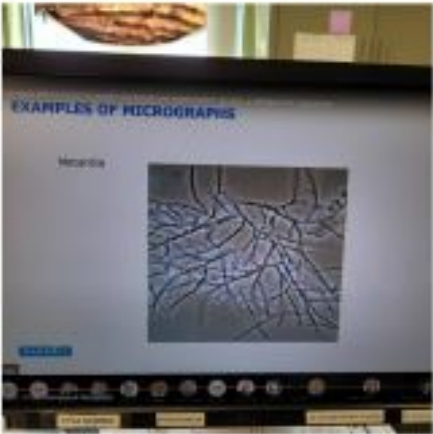
MSW Kitchen trash collected	2,258.90 tons
Construction & demolition	553.24 tons
Recycling	94.61 tons
Tires recycled	65.40 tons
Scrap metal recycled (shreds)	74.68 tons
Whitegoods recycled	5.55 tons

TV & Electronics

10.36 tons

Out of County

12.05 tons









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TOURISM

TOURISM - County Update April 1, 2022

Please accept my apologies for not submitting a county update on March 18. I was busy at the Travel and Adventure Show and missed the deadline. I have incorporated the missed report in this update.

Pender County Tourism continues to provide **Outdoor NC-inspired Leave No Trace information**.

With the increase in gas prices, Pender County Tourism will shift more focus on **things to do** in the region for locals. We already spotlight things to do for those visiting us.

We are adding links and refreshing information to our **tourism website**.

We are taking the required **NeoGov** courses, plus a few extras.

Olivia and Stephanie attended, virtually, the **Main Street Conference**.

Olivia attended the state's annual tourism conference, **Visit NC 365**. She pitched the county to the media and attended various professional development workshops.

Tammy attended the **New York Travel and Adventure Show** (postponed from January). We met with hundreds of travel writers, travel professionals, and potential travelers to our county. This was in collaboration with Visit NC.

Tammy met with the **Rocky Point Training School leadership** to include them on the African American Heritage Trail.

Olivia and Stephanie attended and assisted with **Topsail Chamber's Casino Night** fundraiser.

We continue to collaborate with community groups on the **CF Pope Project**, an oral history of the school alumni. Filming begins April 2.

Tammy participated in the judging of the **Coastal Entrepreneur Awards**.

Tourism is a part of the **Party Planning Committee** for the Service Awards and the Summer Picnic.

Tammy attended a session with **North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** Secretary Elizabeth Biser regarding PFAS.

Tourism met via TEAMS with Earl Moore regarding the **new phone system**.

Tammy had a **Mountains to Sea Trail** executive board meeting via Zoom.

The **North Carolina Beach, Inlet, and Waterway Association** is preparing for its spring conference at The Islander. Tammy, board secretary, also serves on the events subcommittee for the conference.

Tammy attended, virtually, the **Topsail Island Shoreline Protection Commission**. Tourism continues to work in collaboration with the commission regarding trash and debris on the beach and waterways.

Tourism had its first **budget meeting**. The proposed tourism budget is very conservative.

We completed our **COOP** form in emergency preparedness.

Olivia is spearheading the **Pender County Business Expo** set for May 12 at the Hampstead United Methodist Church Family Life Center. Businesses are invited to set up booths. Contact the tourism office for details.

Tammy will attend the **Healthcare Heroes** event on April 1.

Tourism is working with Parks and Recreation on a **bulk buy of totes** for special events.

Tourism is working with community partners on a **Blueberry Week** which will feature special events before the NC Blueberry Festival.

Tourism is collaborating with the **Sea Turtle Hospital and the Topsail Chamber** on an event.

Communications

We have had several official media requests.

It was Sunshine Week and we had a request regarding department policy.

We have prepared several press releases for various departments.

We continue to update the county website and social media.

We attended the DEQ event with regional Public Information Officers.



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REGISTER OF DEEDS

REGISTER OF DEEDS 03/01/2022 TO 03/31/2022	
Maps Recorded	28
Marriage License Issued	31
Passport Applications	147
Passport Photos	157
Notary Oaths Issued	29
Deeds of Trust Recorded	412
Deeds Recorded	494
Vital Certificates Issued (Birth/Death/Marriage)	462
Miscellaneous Documents Recorded	742
Total Fees Collected	\$296,570.60



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LIBRARY

The Main Library in Burgaw is changing our story time offerings beginning April 4th. We will now host Family Story Time every Monday and Toddler Time on Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11:00. This change was made based on responses to a patron survey. Monday's Family Story Time will include books, songs, and fun for young children of all ages. Tuesday's Toddler Time will provide stories, songs, and movement for our youngest patrons, children from birth through 3 years old.

Hampstead Branch Library is hosting a special Saturday preschool story time to celebrate International Children's Book Day this Saturday, April 2nd from 11:00 to 12:00. Join Hampstead Branch Library staff for a morning of music, books, and more!

The Main Library is hosting our Poetry Slam this Saturday, April 2nd from 11:00 to 1:00. All ages are welcome to participate or attend as audience members! Join us for a morning of poetry, refreshments, and prizes from local businesses and organizations. Special thanks to staff from UNCW-based literary magazines Atlantis and Seabreeze who are volunteering as judges and to Brown Dog Coffee Company for donating the coffee for this event. Many thanks to the local businesses and organizations who donated to our prize baskets: Burgaw Antiqueplace, The County Seat, Friends of the Pender County Library, The Glass Cloche, Lanier's Hardware and Rental, the North Carolina Blueberry Festival, Pender County Tourism, and Southern Printing & Electronics Co.

Tweens and teens are invited to join us for an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn of the Main Library in Burgaw on Saturday, April 9th from 11:00-1:00. Children aged 10 and up are encouraged to come hunt for Easter eggs and play lawn games like cornhole and jumbo checkers. The egg hunt will start at 11:30 so be sure to get there on time!



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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Bi-Weekly Programming Update – April 1, 2022

NC Cooperative Extension Agents work with Pender County residents and farmers, helping them find research-based solutions to problems. We work in agriculture, horticulture, natural resources and the environment (storm water, erosion, wetlands restoration, water quality, etc.) and 4-H Youth Development teaching civic leadership and community development.

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Consumer Horticulture – Tiffanee Boone

- 2021-22 Pender County Extension Master Gardener volunteers (EMGV) Speakers Bureau schedule:

<https://pender.ces.ncsu.edu/2021/08/pender-county-extension-master-gardeners-speakers-bureau-update/>.

- Posting gardening information on the Pender County Extension Master Gardener Facebook page.
- Answered 33 phone calls, text messages, email messages, and Facebook messenger questions about gardening and soils.
- Delivered 1 Zoom training to 32 Extension Master Gardener Volunteers and a zoom meeting with a mentee in Bladen County.
- Taught 2 farmers about hair sheep production, marketing, processing, and pastures/fencing to get them started.
- Extension Master Gardener Volunteers have been weeding and mulching the gardens at Poplar Grove to get ready for the Herb and Garden Fair on April 2nd and 3rd
- Extension Master Gardener Volunteers activities included: a garden workday at the Hampstead library, monthly board meeting, assisted Pender County Parks & Recreation with the countywide tree give away in Burgaw and Hampstead, hanging signs and banners for the upcoming plant sale and replenished the shell mulch at the ornamental garden at Poplar Grove Plantation. The garden's purpose is to educate the public about plants grown during the mid-1800's. Using shells in the walkway was very popular in the 1700s and 1800s.

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Area Environment and Natural Resources Agent – Amy Mead

- Working with the NC Sea Grant Coastal Landscapes Initiative creating educational materials for alternatives to invasive and problematic landscaping plants.
- Continuing to deliver the Backyard Sustainability Class Series. Topics covered: coastal ecology of the

Cape Fear region, threats to water quality, storm water management solutions, native plant selection and composting.

- Working with Surf City Planning Board to develop a landscape plan for the area in front of the new bridge going to the island.
- Assisting Cape Fear area residents with issues related to private pond water quality, fish stocking, and aquatic weeds.
- A regional Rain Garden/Water Harvesting Certification Workshop is scheduled for April 21 in Brunswick County in conjunction with the NCSU Department of Bio and Ag Engineering. This workshop will be geared towards landscape contractors to teach best management practices to prevent pollutants from reaching waterways and capturing storm water. CEU's available.

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4-H Youth Development – Traci Spencer

- Planned Tri-County 4-H Presentations Workshop scheduled for April 14th.
- Delivered fertilized chicken eggs and incubators to 9 Pender County School classrooms to participate in the 4-H Embryology program
- Professional Development: Attended the 4-H March Institute at NCSU to learn about the new 4-H Thrive Model and 4-H Club management.
- Continuing 4-H School Enrichment programming at Malpass Corner Elementary. Programming included The Power of The Wind, Lucky Greens and Grow with 4-H.
- Completed and submitted 4-H Camp Scholarship applications for 12 Pender County 4-H youth. Scholarships will be awarded on April 15 for 4-H Summer Camp.
- 4-H Teen Council met and UNCW intern lead a program on Mindfulness and Stress Management. Teens enjoyed making aromatherapy dough and learning breathing exercises.
- 24, 4-H youth participating in the Coastal Plains Chicken Project brought their young chickens to a chicken showmanship workshop with Duplin Co. Livestock agent teaching chicken show skills and techniques. Youth are preparing for the upcoming Coastal Plains Chicken Show, April 26th in Lenoir Co. Chicken Project Record Books are due April 15th.
- 4-H and EFNEP set up an information booth at the Penderlea Day event at Penderlea Elementary. Spent the day connecting with Pender County families and school staff.
- Met with Pender County Beekeepers' Assoc. and spoke about 4-H, bee conservation and youth opportunities in beekeeping.

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Expanded Foods & Nutrition (EFNEP) – Cindy Rivenbark

- Beginning nutrition education programs at Malpass Corner Elementary School in partnership with the 21st Century after school program staff.

- Working to develop programs/partnerships with Penderlea Day and Smart Start Family Day, and other community organizations for future programming.
- Stocking up on food supplies and ordering materials for upcoming lessons.

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Administration – Melissa Massing

- Participating in mandated computer security, financial management and civil rights training and receiving mentoring support from the Sampson County Extension Administrative Assistant.
- Supporting walk-in clients, answering phone calls, paying bills, ordering supplies and learning county and NCSU financial management protocols.

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Agriculture / Commercial Horticulture – Mark Seitz

- Much needed rainfall came to Pender County the last two weeks. Rainfall amounts ranged from 1” to 3” across the county between the two storms.
- Frost protection measures in strawberries and blueberries were successful. But secondary disease and insect management problems arose with their use. Worked with farmers to address botrytis (plant disease) in strawberries and to assess freeze damage in blueberries and strawberries.
- Walked winter wheat fields to look for winter freeze damage from the freeze events in early and late March.
- Collected soil samples for background data at a soil nutrient research project site. With high fertilizer prices farmers are trying to increase their use of poultry manure as a fertilizer source. Extended use can lead to high zinc levels.
- Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), carried by wild birds, forced the NC Department of Agriculture to euthanize 32,000 turkeys on a farm in Johnston County. It is NOT present in Pender County at this time, but backyard and commercial poultry producers should watch their birds closely for signs of respiratory problems and contact their local veterinarian, the state veterinarian or the Extension office for assistance if they suspect HPAI in their flocks.
- Picked up field corn seed for variety testing as part of a nine county testing program.

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Community Development – Mark Seitz

- Planning is underway for two blueberry gleaning events to be held at the Horticulture Crops Research Station in Castle Hayne. Harvested blueberries will be donated to the Eastern NC Food Bank in Wilmington and other food banks in eastern NC.
- Partnering with the NC Blueberry Festival Planning Committee to secure sponsorship for two charter

buses that will shuttle people from Burgaw to the Horticulture Crops Research Farm in Castle Hayne as part of the NC Blueberry Festival. The goal is to give people attending the blueberry festival in June, a one-hour tour of the research farm and talk to NCSU researchers who are looking for ways to increase the health, nutrition, and productive value of blueberries. Stay tuned for more details.