



Employee Newsletter JULY 2017



JULY BIRTHDAYS

Melissa Schlarb	1
Dustin Lee	2
Stephen Zoller	2
Sandra Page	3
James Bolick	4
Lacy Hensley	4
Julie Stillwell	4
Tim Howe	6
Andrew Lanphere	6
Sarah Pendarvis	6
Bruce Brown	7
Debra Gardner	7
Ann Cole	9
Keith Watkins	9
Jane Stiles	11
Connie Fowler	12
Joy Kephart	12
Dan Sherrill	13
Katrina Plemmons	14
Jon Crist	15
Jason Rowland	15
Heather Weaver	15
Kitt Bolus	16
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Jake Bryson	17
Jimmy Amos	20
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Scott Lindsay	25
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Buddy Williams	27
Courtney Myers	28
Ryan Wilson	28
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Ages 17 to 81

VERY IMPORTANT!!! PLEASE READ!!!

Our new insurance ID cards have arrived and they will be available for pickup in your department this week. **The only thing that has changed is the Pharmacy information for filling prescriptions**, so if you do not pick up your new card and try to fill a prescription after July 1st, you will encounter a denial of your claim. If you take a drug that requires prior authorization, that will now be done through sona benefits rather than through Crescent. There is a pharmacy helpline # on the front of the card.

Please bring your old card and turn it in and pick up your new one as close to June 30 as possible. Try to get any prescriptions you need before July 1 filled before the 30th and make sure your pharmacy gets your new information in July. You may make a copy of your old card to keep if you want to keep that information but there is no change to medical and dental coverage or where to file those claims. **Again, this change only applies to prescription drug coverage**. SONA replaces CVS/Caremark as our pharmacy provider and CVS will no longer be a covered pharmacy so if you are one of the few people who used CVS, you will have to find another pharmacy for your prescriptions.

A NOTE ABOUT FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS

I want to make sure that anyone who enrolled in the flexible spending accounts understands that even though we will receive pre-loaded debit cards to use with our flex accounts (or you already have one from last year—if it hasn't expired you will continue to use the card you have), **YOU STILL NEED TO KEEP YOUR RECEIPTS TO SUBMIT TO SUBSTANTIATE YOUR CLAIMS**. Unless you are using an approved no-receipt vendor (there is a list of these on the flex website which is www.myflexonline.com.) you have to submit a receipt every time you use your card.

PAY INCREASES/DISABILITY PREMIUMS

We are fortunate this year to be receiving a flat dollar pay increase that was approved at the Commission meeting on June 26th. This increase was given to full-time employees and part-time employees in a budgeted part-time position and goes into effect with the July 14th pay date. Because of this pay increase and the fact that we collect premiums a month in advance, those of you who have STD and LTD will see an increase in your premium on the July 14 paycheck to collect the difference that should have been collected in June and the rate will go to what it will be for the rest of the year unless you have an age related adjustment (birthdays causing age to end in a 0 or 5) on July 28.

Also, just a reminder that the June 30th pay date is the third pay period in June and as such there will be no leave accruals and no insurance, Credit Union or VALIC deductions.

Is there something you would like to see in the newsletter? Please email Melody at melody.johnson@cherokeecounty-nc.gov with any suggestions.

Commissioners Board Meetings
July 3, 6:30 pm (may be canceled)
July 17, 6:30 pm

Drowning: It Can Happen in an Instant

Not including boating incidents, on average about nine people die from drowning every day in the United States, according to *Injury Facts 2017* the annual statistical report on unintentional injuries produced by NSC.

Teens and Young Adults Often Don't Think About Safety

When we think of water safety, we often think of the potential for young children to drown. But drowning [also is a concern for teens](#) and young adults. While drowning is more common for children 5 and younger, it's the second leading cause of death for people age 5-24. According to NSC data, 737 people age 5 to 24 drowned in 2014.



Swimmers should keep a [few safety precautions](#) in mind:

- Don't go in the water unless you know how to swim; swim lessons are available for all ages
- Never swim alone
- Learn CPR and rescue techniques
- Make sure the body of water matches your skill level; swimming in a pool is much different than swimming in a lake or river, where more strength is needed to handle currents
- If you do get caught in a current, don't try to fight it; stay calm and float with it, or swim parallel to the shore until you can swim free
- Swim in areas supervised by a lifeguard
- Don't push or jump on others
- Don't dive in unfamiliar areas
- Never drink alcohol when swimming; alcohol is involved in about half of all male teen drownings, according to KidsHealth.org

The Younger the Child, the Greater the Risk

Most parents think water safety is first and foremost on their minds whenever they are enjoying summer activities with their young kids. But when the unthinkable happens and a child drowns, parents and caregivers have been known to say, "I only looked away for a second."

NSC statistics point to drowning as a leading cause of death for young children – mostly due to [children falling into a pool](#) or being left alone in the bathtub.

Of the 3,406 drownings in 2014, more than 12% were children age 4 and younger, according to *Injury Facts 2017*. These statistics are in line with Consumer Product Safety Commission reports, which state [more than 200 children ages 1 to 14 drowned in pools and spas](#) during summer 2013. Bathtubs, toilets and even buckets also can pose a danger for very young children.

Distractions Make for Tragedies

Parents are cautioned all the time about water safety, but drownings still occur. Always be aware and be in the present moment with your children. Following are a few water safety precautions:

- Never leave your child alone; if you have to leave, take your child with you
- Find age-appropriate swim lessons for your child, but keep in mind that lessons do not make your child "drown-proof"
- Lifeguards aren't babysitters; always keep your eyes on your child
- Don't let children [play around drains and suction fittings](#)
- Never consume alcohol when operating a boat, and always make sure everyone is wearing U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets
- Don't underestimate the power of water; even rivers and lakes can have undertows
- Always have a first aid kit and emergency contacts handy
- Get training in CPR
- If a child is missing, check the water first

Every pool, every lake and every warm summer day holds the possibility of new, fun summer experiences. All you need to add is your undivided attention.



Help Us Go Green!

Just a friendly reminder the Tax Assessor's office now offers you the ability to receive your tax bills electronically.

If you are interested, please log on to <http://cherokee.nctaxstatements.com>

Enter the requested information which will include your Registration ID that can be found on your
2016 tax bill.

If you have any questions, please contact
Dana Allen at extension 821

The deductible year for our health and dental insurance ends on June 30. The new deductible year begins July 1st. Also, the Vision plan year starts over again on July 1st. Please remember this.

UPGRADES TO PLAYGROUND AT KONEHETE PARK

I hope everybody saw the article on the front page of the Cherokee Scout last week highlighting the upgrades done and being done at the Konehete Recreation Park in Murphy. Thank you to all the recreation department employees, maintenance, any others who helped and Commissioners for making this happen. Great job, guys! It looks great!!!

Why is heat a hazard to workers?

When a person works in a hot environment, the body must get rid of excess heat to maintain a stable internal temperature. It does this mainly through circulating blood to the skin and through sweating.



When the air temperature is close to or warmer than normal body temperature, cooling of the body becomes more difficult. Blood circulated to the skin cannot lose its heat. Sweating then becomes the main way the body cools off. But sweating is effective only if the humidity level is low enough to allow evaporation, and if the fluids and salts that are lost are adequately replaced.

If the body cannot get rid of excess heat, it will store it. When this happens, the body's core temperature rises and the heart rate increases. As the body continues to store heat, the person begins to lose concentration and has difficulty focusing on a task, may become irritable or sick, and often loses the desire to drink. The next stage is most often fainting and even death if the person is not cooled down.

Excessive exposure to heat can cause a range of [heat-related illnesses](#), from heat rash and heat cramps to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke can result in death and requires **immediate medical attention**.

Exposure to heat can also increase the risk of injuries because of sweaty palms, fogged-up safety glasses, dizziness, and burns from hot surfaces or steam.

ECLIPSE UPDATE

No final decision has been made on whether County offices will be closed on August 21st, the date of the eclipse, but it is anticipated that they will indeed be closed. As soon as I get final word from our Commissioners, I will pass that along as well as how to report your time for that day. Either way, the officials who are dealing with this are encouraging local folks to stay off the roads that day if at all possible. The analogy has been made that we should treat this like we would a snow day, groceries included. :)

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County Of Cherokee

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Your Profile ID: 685096

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