

Camden County Newsletter

Meet The New Dismal Swamp Welcome Center Director!

Camden County is very fortunate to have Donna Stewart as the new Director of the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center. Having worked at the Center for several years now, she has gained tremendous insight into how best to accommodate the needs of the boating and traveling public. She and the staff do a very thorough job of assisting their clients with travel information, lodging reservations, tour bookings and a host of other items. It is not unusual to find Donna or one of the other staff members going to great lengths to provide some much needed assistance to a boater or motorist in need. She has completed numerous travels, tourism and eco-tourism training programs including the Georgia Travel College Program. When your family needs some travel information or assistance please feel free to give Donna or her staff a call at 252-771-8333 and they will be glad to share their expertise.

As a lifelong resident of Camden County, she has grown up admiring the natural beauty of this region and has developed a unique talent of being able to promote it. Believe it or not, there are over 500,000 members of the traveling public coming through the Center each year. If your interest lies in the many outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, kayaking, canoeing, or bird watching, she will make sure you get the information or direction you need.

Donna is truly one of the best ambassadors we could ever have for Camden County!



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Meals on Wheels Needs Volunteers!

Imagine being 93 years old, unable to cook for yourself, not having enough money to buy food, and having to depend on someone else to do almost everything for you every day. Being able to lift some of the responsibility off of relatives and family members would be something that you would love to do.

The Camden Senior Center Meals on Wheels program would be able to lift that burden at least once a day Mon-Friday with YOUR help. Camden is now serving 15 home bound

participants but there are MANY MORE that need assistance. Because of distance, lack of volunteers, and another pick up spot 3 seniors were already turned away last week residing in Shiloh all 89-93 years old. Camden needs more volunteers on the current routes and at least one more route in Shiloh.

For 1 hour, 1 day out of the week you can make a big difference in a seniors' life. For more information please call Shana Trafton, Senior Center Director at 335-2569.

Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.
 -John Wooden

Parks & Recreation



Camden County parks & Rec are proud to announce the following programs... COME OUT and show support for Camden's Youth!

Girls Volleyball

This was the very first program offered by the Camden Parks and Recreation Department in the Fall of 2008. The volleyball league is comprised of girl's ages 7-15 years old. The season begins in late August and continues through the beginning of November. The participants are divided into three age divisions, 7-9 year olds, 10-12 year olds and 13-15 year olds. Annually we have approximately 100 girls participating in this league. Registration for the 2011 season will be held on August 15th & 16th from 5pm-8pm at the Camden County Parks and Recreation office.

Youth Basketball

The Camden County Youth Basketball program began during the winter of 2008. Annually we have over 250 kids that participate in this program. The league is divided into 6 divisions, 5&6 Year Old Coed, 7-9 Year Old Girls, 7-9 Year Old Boys, 10-12 Year Old Girls, 10-12 Year Old Boys, and 13-16 Year Old Boys. The season begins in November and runs through the first of March. Games are played at the Grandy Primary /Camden Intermediate School Gymnasium Monday through Thursday nights and during the days on Saturday.

Parks & Rec...

2011 Camden Parks and Recreation Summer Activities

Jr. Bruin Basketball Camp

July 11-14 (Boys & Girls Grades K-3, Cost \$40) 9am-12pm daily
Participants will receive a camp T-Shirt and Basketball. Individuals will learn the fundamentals of basketball as well as have healthy fun.

Baby Sitting Certification Course

July 12-14 (Girls Ages 12 and Up, Cost \$25) 9am-3pm daily
Participants will receive training and certification in CPR, First Aid, and Care Giving.

Sailing Camp

July 25-29(Ages 11-15, Cost \$75) 2pm-5pm daily
This is a week of fun on the water. The participants will learn to sail a Sunfish type boat,
all basic sailing skills will be taught as well as basic seamanship skills.
All equipment will be provided.

Adult Sailing Lessons

July 25-29 (Ages 16 and up, Cost \$75) 5:30pm-8pm daily
The participants will learn to sail a Sunfish type boat,
all basic sailing skills will be taught as well as basic seamanship skills.
All equipment will be provided.

Skateboarding Camp

August 1-4(Ages 10-15, Cost \$70) 9am-4pm daily
Skate parks include: Mt. Trashmore, PCM, Soundside, Woodstock,
Maple, Fun Junktion and Gates Community Center
Skateboard, Helmet, Knee & Elbow Pads REQUIRED!!!!

Registration Forms available at the Camden County Parks and Recreation Dept.

Camden Babe Ruth Association, Inc.

Organization

Established in 1989
Incorporated as a North Carolina Non-Profit in 1999
Federal 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Status in 2001
Affiliated with Babe Ruth League Inc., a national organization headquartered in Trenton, NJ
Volunteer Organization
Board of Directors elected annually
Guided by Constitution and By-Laws (available online at www.camdenbaberuth.com)
League Boundaries include Camden and Pasquotank counties

Purpose

To provide a safe and fun opportunity for the youth of our community to participate in an organized Baseball/Softball Program

Facilities

All games and practices are held at the Camden County Community Park, Camden High School Girls Softball Field and the River Road Middle School

Teams/Players (2010 Season)

League consisted of 870 players on 59 teams in 10 age divisions.

Camden Youth Football and Cheerleading Association

The Camden Youth Football and Cheerleading Association (CYFCA) was organized in the year 2002. The purpose was to give the youth in Camden County an opportunity to play football and to cheer. The CYFCA consists of five flag football teams (Ages 6-8) and four tackle football teams (Ages 7-12). The league also has nine cheerleading squads, one for each of the football teams. The flag football program begins games in early September and plays through the end of October. All flag football practices and games are held during the week at the Camden County Community Park. The CYFCA tackle football teams are members of the Albemarle Youth Football League (AYFL). The AYFL is composed of teams from Bertie County, Chowan County, Currituck County, Dare County, Gates County, Hertford County, Pasquotank County, and Perquimans County. The AYFL is divided into three divisions, Mite-ages 7-9, Peewee-ages 9-10, Midget-ages 11&12. League games are played on Saturdays beginning in September and ending the middle of November. The AYFL rotates games weekly allowing each member to host games throughout the season. This season will be the 10th year for the Camden Youth Football and Cheerleading Association. The CYFCA is a non-profit volunteer run organization that serves approximately 300 kids annually.



Dismal Swamp Welcome Center

Our 8th annual Paddle for the Border was the most successful event to date. With over 350 paddlers and perfect weather, everyone involved felt the day could not have been any better. Assistant Secretary of the Army, Jo-Ellen Darcy was a special guest while visiting the Norfolk District Army Corps of Engineers office. Ms. Darcy is promoting President Obama's "America's Great Outdoors Initiative". Established in April, 2010, this initiative's goal is to integrate local cultural, historical and natural resources, while engaging the public in recreational pursuits. This event embodies the quest of this initiative. Paddle for the Border's date for 2012 has been set for May 5th with registration beginning mid-January 2012. (www.DismalSwampWelcomeCenter.com)

We've been having lots of recreational boaters come through the Canal with 345 boats locking during the month of May. The Dismal Swamp Canal is 22 miles long with a lock at each end in South Mills and Deep Creek, VA. The Army Corps of Engineers maintains the canal with a controlling depth of 6 foot and the locks operate four times daily. The canal is a no wake zone, so a speed of no more than 6 knots is allowed. Many boats which headed south for the winter are now returning to the northern states.

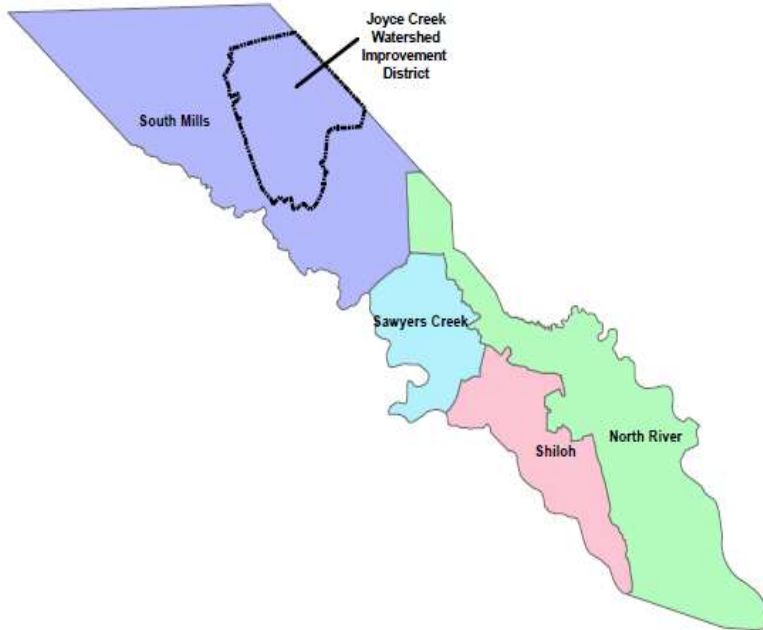
After nearly 23 years as director, Penny Leary-Smith retired May 31st. She was recognized for her achievements at a reception on May 6th, at the Dismal Swamp State Park. She received many letters of achievements and awards, but most notably, the Long Leaf Pine Award from Governor Beverly Perdue, presented by Rep. Bill Owens. Leary-Smith has helped to gain recognition for the Dismal Swamp and the Dismal Swamp Canal. Maintaining funding for this important historic waterway is vital to our region. Her assistant for the past three years, local Camden native, Donna Sawyer Stewart will step into her position.

If you are looking for recreational activities, come visit the Dismal Swamp. Our three mile paved trail is a great place to hike, bike, bird or take photos. Butterflies and Dragonflies are bountiful at this time of year. Watching them float and dip on the breeze can be a wonderful relaxing pastime. The **Dismal Swamp State Park** has a great half-mile long boardwalk to explore nature. This time of year also brings out the bugs, so use precaution when hiking through grassy areas. The State Park offers canoes and kayaks to explore the beautiful reflective waters of the Canal. They offer Ranger led programs each week-end the whole family will enjoy. For more details, call them at 771-6593 or visit www.ncparks.gov.

Come see what you are missing!

Contact: 252-771-8333

E-mail: dscwelcome@camdencountync.gov



County Storm Water District

On May 2, 2011 the Board of Commissioners agreed to set up advisory committees in each of the four major watersheds in the County. These committees will help identify critical drainage issues in each watershed, develop a plan to conduct an ongoing maintenance for key ditches and creeks, prepare an annual budget estimate to implement the plan, and make funding recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. In the future these committees may become formal Districts and may also undertake specific storm water and drainage improvements. There are two or three methods to implement these efforts, which will also be evaluated by the committees.

It is important to note that the County does not currently have responsibility for any ditch or stream maintenance, and can only regulate storm water through our land development regulations. In recent years as property is developed, owners are required to submit storm water plans prepared by professional engineers or surveyors. These plans must be in compliance with both state and local requirements. Major subdivisions plans are reviewed and approved by the state Division of Water Quality and the County's consulting engineer, and they are required to establish homeowners associations to maintain the drainage ways within their subdivision.

Solving existing drainage issues and overall watershed issues remains a patchwork of responsibilities. The NCDOT has responsibility for roadside ditches, and in the past has maintained some peripheral channels. Now they are limited to roadside maintenance. Private property owners are responsible for ditches on their property and the farmers generally cooperate for economic reasons to keep the drainage working properly for their crop production. As large tracts are divided up either through estates or sales of individual parcels, the private responsibility is also becoming fragmented. And then there are our swamps and creeks. Keeping creeks free flowing is subject to regulations of the NC Department of Wildlife and the Division of Marine Fisheries that restrict when, how much, and what type of maintenance can be accomplished without upsetting the fish hatcheries and other ecological balances.

One exception to these problems is the Joys Creek Drainage District which includes a relatively large geographic area where property owners are taxed \$0.02 to fund maintenance efforts. This District was established in 1973 to maintain Joys Creek and the two (2) main channels that flow into the creek. The problem here is that there are many other ditches and small tributaries in the taxing area for which the District does not have responsibility.

Now for the kicker. The state and federal government regulates and even has some grant and loan funding for storm water projects. But we have to keep in mind that their concerns are all about WATER QUALITY, not drainage. In laymen's terms the agencies would prefer to have water stand and/or flow slowly so it will drop and filter pollutants and percolate into the ground before entering water bodies. In the long term it is critical to all of us that we put a priority on water quality as we see what happens when streams and bays become polluted.

The key to a successful storm water management program is to find solutions that address both water quality and drainage. As you can see, dealing with storm water issues is everyone's responsibility. In the future we will begin explaining through our web site, this newsletter, and community meetings, how everyone can help take steps to improve drainage and water quality.

If you are interested in serving on one of the storm water advisory committees please fill out and submit a volunteer form (<http://camdencountync.gov/government/forms/volunteer-form-2010.pdf>). Also the public will have opportunities in the upcoming Comprehensive Planning meetings to discuss storm water along with other important county issues.

You can view maps of the four (4) watershed areas and report re-occurring serious drainage problems on the County's web site at <http://www.camdencountync.gov/government/drainage-maps.htm>.

South Mills Small Area Plan

The residents and businesses of the South Mills Core Village have an opportunity to plan for the village's development or redevelopment through the preparation of a "small area plan."

Several months ago East Carolina University Office of Engagements, Innovation, and Economic Development (OEIED) chose Camden County to participate in their Municipal Management and Innovation Initiative program (MMI). This program focuses technical assistance through faculty and students on specific issues identified jointly by the OEIED and the clients. The project team has chosen to focus on South Mills

The purpose of the study is to develop a vision, goals & objectives, policies, and action plans in both written and graphic form to improve both the function and appearance of the South Mills core area as an economically sustainable mixed use village. Key issue areas are: Public Involvement, Land use, Transportation, Environment, Economic Development, Neighborhoods, Community Heritage, and Sustainable Development.

Specific work tasks may include:

- Conduct community survey and 1 or more meetings to gather public input regarding the future of the village core area and surroundings.
- Establish study area boundary.
- Conduct land use survey of all properties within study area to include 1) existing and recommended land uses and 2) building (housing & commercial) conditions.
- Review plans and regulations of appropriate local, state, and federal agencies involved with proposed improvements.
- Identify public infrastructure needs (water, sewer, roads, parks, streetscape, etc.) including facilities and design improvements needed to support infill development and recommended use of existing undeveloped/underdeveloped properties.
- Identify environmental assets and constraints and their impact on future development.
- Prepare a written report and related graphics and illustrations.
- Present recommendations to community and County Commissioners.

This project is particularly timely as the County initiates the countywide Comprehensive Planning process as well as specific wastewater improvements for the South Mills.



Serendipity: County Comprehensive Plan

It is rare that the timing is right for a community to maximize internal and outside resources to accomplish large undertakings, but Camden County seems to be in the right place at the right time. In the last 5 to 7 years Camden has created momentum to develop and carry out some very significant plans and projects. Beginning with the decision and funding back in 2004 to build the county's first sewer system and the new intermediate school, the county has proceeded to expand the community park, start a Parks & Recreation Department, expand water treatment capacity, create an idea and install infrastructure for an Eco Industrial Park, and begin rebuilding the Treasure Point 4 H camp. With limited local matching funds the county has leveraged funding from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund; the Rural Center; the Department of Commerce; the Department of Transportation; the Coastal Resources Commission; and the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund. Thanks to the citizens, local leaders, state representatives, and state agencies, Camden has "New Energy and New Vision."

The momentum continues. The Board of Commissioners has approved and committed local funds for a contract with a consultant team led by Clarion Associates from Chapel Hill to conduct a countywide comprehensive planning process that the County Manager outlined in the last newsletter. But that's not all. Currently the county's consulting engineers are preparing a plan for the future of the US 17 corridor, and a group of leaders from both North Carolina and Virginia are working together to find a way to connect their respective Dismal Swamp Hiking and Biking Trails. Also, the NC Department of Transportation has notified the county that they will soon be starting to prepare a required Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Camden; and as outlined in this newsletter East Carolina University will be lending a hand in South Mills to prepare a more detailed small area plan for the core village. Last but not least the Camden Economic Development Commission has been organized, assisted with planning for the Eco Industrial Park, is looking for additional ways to grow Camden's economic base, and is initiating an integrated marketing/branding communication program. Soon a new county website will go live and offer citizens a new way to receive and submit information to the county.

The Comprehensive Planning process will coordinate all of these ongoing efforts, and give us opportunities to drill down to some specific issues. With NCDOT involvement in looking at the overall transportation network, Clarion & Associates may be able to focus on some of the more detailed specific intersection needs. Likewise the ECU project can provide more parcel by parcel details for South Mills, and serve as a template for future small area plans for the Camden and Shiloh core areas.

Community participation will be critical to a successful outcome of all these efforts. Keep an eye on the county web site and other notices in the coming months to learn how as individuals we can come together cooperatively to chart Camden's future.



CamTech: A New Way of Learning

CamTech High School (CTHS) is beginning its sixth year on the campus of Camden County High School. CamTech is a “redesign” high school with the North Carolina New Schools Project. It is also the flagship global school for Camden County Schools’ partnership with World View at UNC – Chapel Hill. CTHS offers honors classes and one-to-one computer access to students in grades nine through twelve.

Students learn to work in teams to do research on real-world problems. They use the latest software and Internet-based programs, as well as a variety of other technology tools, to prepare projects which they present to audiences of both adults and students. CamTech emphasizes critical thinking, research, problem-solving and collaboration as the learning platform. Students at CamTech participate in all of the sports and other extra-curricular activities available to the students of Camden County High School. In addition to these opportunities, each student must give at least twenty volunteer hours annually to this community.

CamTech has a strong family-like environment with high expectations for all students. The culture of the school has been the foundation of much success during the past five years. CamTech has been a North Carolina School of Distinction in both 2007 and 2010 and has a 90% graduation rate. Eighty percent of the graduates have achieved college admission with some going to schools such as UNC-Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, Brigham Young University at Provo, and the University of Missouri. In addition, the first two graduating classes earned \$486,000 in scholarship money and have given over 9,800 hours of volunteer time back to their community.

County Tax Department

Real Estate

Camden County is on a permanent listing system for real property. With permanent listing, you will not receive an annual listing form for real estate – it will be automatically listed. All real estate is listed in the Tax Department based on deeds recorded and ownership as of January 1st of each year. The taxes are due annually and are usually mailed to the taxpayer or mortgage company in August. Tax bills are due and payable on September 1 of the fiscal year for which the taxes are levied. Taxes are payable at par or face amount if paid before January 6 following the due date. Taxes paid on or after January 6 following the due date are delinquent and are subject to interest charges. Interest accrues monthly.

Personal Property (excluding registered vehicles)

Personal property such mobile homes, unregistered motor vehicles, boats, business equipment, etc. must be listed every year during the listing period of January 1 to January 31. Listing abstracts will be sent to all taxpayers who listed these types of property for the prior tax year. If you had never listed before the taxpayer must come to the tax department to list. Ownership of property is determined as of January 1st each year. Bills are mailed and due same as real property as listed above.

Register Motor Vehicles

Motor Vehicles are billed approximately four months after the registration is renewed or tags are purchased for a new vehicle. DMV forwards all information to the Tax Department. You will receive a bill which is payable on the first day of the following month. If taxes are not paid on time, the tax collector will issue a "block." If a vehicle receives a block, the registration cannot be renewed again until the taxes plus interest have been paid. The tax will be prorated for the time you had it if you provide required proof of form F20 from DMV for tag return.

Tax Rate

The tax rate is set each year by the Camden County Commissioners, based upon the county's taxable base and the budgetary requirements.

Military Exclusion

As per the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act personal property taxes are not due in Camden County if you are active military and your home of record is in another state. Military personnel must provide proof to the Tax Department in order to receive this exclusion. Even though military personnel qualifies for this exclusion all personal property must still be listed with the county tax office.

Payment of tax bills

There are several options for paying your bill:

1. Pay at the Tax Office located behind the courthouse.
2. Place your payment in the drop slot (located in the front door of our office).
3. Mail your payment to Camden County Tax Office
P.O. Box 125
Camden, NC 27921
4. To pay with credit card: 1-800-272-9829 (jurisdiction code 4375).
5. www.officialpayments.com (jurisdiction code 4375)

Camden County

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Camden, NC 27921
(252) 338-1919
(252) 333-1603
info@camdencountync.gov

New Energy, New Vision

Find us on the Web:
www.CamdenCountyNC.GOV



NEW WEBSITE!!!

Camden County is proud to announce our new official website. A whole new look to help move towards a brighter, smoother future.

The official launch date for the new website will be July 18, 2011. Please, click on your web browser and type in the following address: www.camdencountync.gov.

Enjoy our new design, simpler navigation, and more options to help with County-Citizen interaction!

Camden Senior Happenings

Celebrating Life

Home Safety Month



July 2011
Volume 2, Issue 7

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Safety during an Emergency or Natural Disaster

Home Safety Month is a perfect time to prepare yourself and your family for an emergency. Planning ahead can keep you and your family safe if a flood, fire, flu pandemic, terrorist attack, or other public health emergency strikes.

Take these steps to prepare for an emergency:

Do a walk-through of your home. Check your smoke alarms, child safety locks, and first aid supplies.

- Get an emergency supply kit.
- Make a family emergency plan.
- Stay informed.

Take Action

- At least 3 gallons of water for each person.
- Food for at least 3 days. Choose foods that don't need refrigerators, like energy bars, peanut butter, crackers, and canned fruit (don't forget a can opener).
- Prescription medicine that you take every day, like heart or diabetes medicine.
- A first aid kit to treat cuts, burns, and other basic injuries.

Medications and Medical Supplies

If you take medicine or use a medical treatment on a daily basis, be sure you have what you need to make it on your own for at least a week, maybe longer.

- Make a list of prescription medicines including dosage, treatment and allergy information.
- Talk to your pharmacist or doctor about what else you need to prepare.
- If you undergo routine treatments administered by a clinic or hospital or if you receive regular services such as home health care, treatment or transportation, talk to your service provider about their emergency plans. Work with them to identify back-up service providers and incorporate them into your personal support network.
- Consider other personal needs such as eyeglasses, hearing aids and hearing aid batteries, wheelchair batteries, and oxygen.

Emergency Documents

Include copies of important documents in your emergency supply kits such as family records, medical records, insurance cards, wills, deeds, social security number, charge and bank accounts information and tax records.

Give these copies to someone trusted.