

COUNTY CLIPS

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ART CONTINUES TO SERVE CITIZENS

Area of Richmond Transit (ART) helps citizens with their transportation needs while also providing a solution to high gas prices.

In the month of June alone, ART transported 5,638 people and traveled close to 21,000 miles. That averages out to serving more than 217 people each day.

Through its Rural General Public operation, ART

serves citizens who are not human services agency clients for a small fee.

“We provide transportation for everything from doctor’s appointments and pharmacy visits to simply traveling to work or school,” said Director Johnnie Morman. “We take people to do their shopping, and even transport citizens to Moore County for medical appointments twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday.”

During the week, ART serves seniors by taking them to and from Richmond County meal sites.

A number of citizens benefit from this service, as many senior adults may not have reliable transportation to the nutritional food sites.

Services are offered Monday through Friday, and on Saturday for dialysis patients.

For more information or to schedule transportation, call 895-1313.

QUICK STATS

- **16:** Miles of roadways cleaned up in June under the supervision of Richmond County Solid Waste Enforcement Officer Allen Hodges. One investigation of garbage burning was also conducted during the month.
- **33,173:** Number of tax bills sent out to Richmond County property owners during the month of July. Those who pay their bill in full by Aug. 31 will receive a 1 percent discount.
- **1,611:** Number of calls requesting the assistance of the Richmond County Sheriff’s Office during the month of May.
- **742:** Number of new voter registrations processed by the Richmond County Board of Elections Office between April 11 and the May 6 Primary Election.
- **264:** Number of requests made in-person during the month of May for services offered through the Veteran Services Office. This office operates with only one employee, Tonia Hildreth, who is responsible for counseling veterans and their families on benefits offered by the local, state and federal governments.

COUNTY ENCOURAGES CITIZENS TO CONSERVE

Like many other areas of the state, Richmond County has been experiencing extremely hot temperatures. We have been fortunate to have benefitted from the recent rainfall, which moved the county’s status from extreme to severe, according to the most recent drought map.

While the County has not enacted any mandatory water restrictions at this time, we continue to ask citizens to conserve water whenever possible.

Practicing water conservation will not only lower your water bill, but will pre-

vent water restrictions and cut costs. Some of the methods to cut water usage follow.

- Check for and repair any leaks;
- Take short showers;
- Cut water off while brushing teeth and/or shaving;
- Run dishwashers and washing machines only when they are full;
- Wash cars less often, and
- Keep grass at least two inches high to shade roots and hold moisture.

11,203

Number of participants attending programs offered in Richmond County Libraries during the last fiscal year. This number represents a 131 percent increase over those attending programs during the 2006-07 year.

EXTENSION AGENTS OFFER TIPS ON TOMATOES

It's a sure sign of summer — red, ripe tomatoes picked fresh from the vine and sliced, ready to make their way into one of the South's most magnificent culinary masterpieces—the tomato sandwich.

Perhaps it's because of the tomato's popularity that the Cooperative Extension Office has received a number of calls this summer concerning problems with the plant. Susceptible to a wide number of diseases, tomatoes effected by serious ones face a rapid decline and death.

The best prevention to these diseases includes using resistant cultivars, such as Better Boy or Mountain Pride.

Some common fungal diseases of tomatoes include Septoria Leaf Spot and Early Blight. Bacterial diseases cause spots on the leaves and fruit.

There are ways to protect your fruit.

Good cultural practices, such as watering during the day so the leaves can dry before evening and removing diseased leaves, can help prevent the spread of disease.

Rotating the area of the garden where you plant tomatoes is also important in avoiding the build-up of diseases.

Other possible causes of problems in tomatoes include very high temperatures, which cause tomatoes to abort their flowers; low night temperatures,

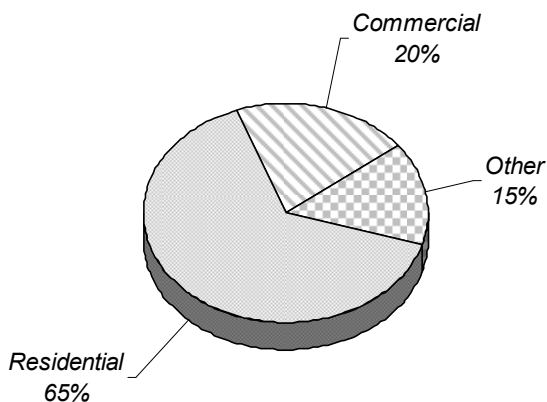
which can cause a loss of fruit, and over-fertilization, which encourages plants to make lots of leaves and no fruit.

Tomatoes are also very susceptible to herbicides, such as Roundup. Depending on weather conditions, these chemicals may drift and cause damage to tomatoes from a considerable distance away. Symptoms of herbicide damage include leaves that are curled, twisted or strap-like.

Cooperative Extension staff members are always available to answer any questions or provide information on growing tomatoes. Agents may be reached at 997-8255.

RICHMOND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**Building Permits for 2007-08 Fiscal Year
Value Added to Tax Base - \$11,347,497**



LOCAL BUSINESSES MAY SEE IMPACT FROM BRAC

Richmond County Economic Developer Rick Sago continues to work with the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Regional Task Force.

The Task Force consists of 11 county governments and municipalities surrounding Ft. Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. The purpose of the organization is to unify and coordinate impact and initiatives associated with the base realignment and closure actions approved by Congress in 2005.

Sago urges businesses in Richmond County that wish to take advantage of growth in Ft. Bragg to register at Web sites which can assist them, including www.Matchforce.org and www.ncmbc.us.

Several factors favor growth in the county due to BRAC. Some of the factors include: access to major highways, rail facilities, availability of water and electric power and the county's proximity to major metropolitan areas.

Did You Know?

Every percentage point on property taxes in the county equals \$230,000. This means that if one percent of property owners don't pay their taxes, \$230,000 can't be budgeted for County-funded programs. Some of the programs taxes pay for include: nutritional meal sites for seniors; public libraries; law enforcement protection, and even the local 9-1-1 Emergency Center.