

COUNTY CLIPS

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COUNTY TAKING A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

There's a lot that goes on behind the scenes in recruiting businesses to Richmond County.

Whether it's showing potential business clients what the county has to offer in economic development initiatives or working with existing industries on providing for their infrastructure needs, the Richmond County Office of Economic Development maintains a proactive stance on increasing business opportunities.

Director Rick Sago recognizes the importance of existing industries to the county's economic stability. He also understands the important role Richmond Community College plays

in providing for local businesses' workforce development needs.

That's why Sago considers the college to be a major asset to the county in recruiting new businesses to the area.

Sago and Vice President Richard Garrett of RCC's Continuing Education Division have established a partnership in an effort to enhance future economic growth.

While the county may be able to provide aid in the form of local incentives, the college is able to assist local businesses in training employees. It is this message that both Sago and Garrett are communicating to local

industries.

"Rick has been a great asset in partnering with the college," Garrett said.

"Our goals are both the same, we want to serve every company in Richmond County. Our collaboration illustrates the efforts of each entity involved with economic development to provide resources for the promotion of industry success."

"It's only through a focused cooperative effort between the county and all of its economic development partners that Richmond County will be able to compete in the global economic development climate," Sago said.

GOT BOOKS? MAKE SURE OTHERS DO TOO

Organize your overcrowded shelves and give your already read books a happy, useful afterlife by donating them to Leath Memorial Library for their Fall Book Sale.

Gently used books will be accepted at the front desk of the library until Oct. 1. The drive is sponsored by the Friends of Leath Memorial Library, who present several author events each year and provide equipment to meet the library's needs.

Jesse Gibson, director of Richmond County Libraries, encourages residents to sort through their collection of books and

pass on any that are barely used for a good cause.

Just how important are public libraries? Consider the fact that Americans check out an average of more than six books a year for an estimated cost of \$25. What most taxpayers spend in an entire year for the use of public libraries averages out to less than the typical cost of one hardcover book.

Donations may be dropped off at Leath Memorial Library, located at 412 East Franklin St., Rockingham. For more information, call 895-6337.

QUICK STATS

- **\$15,118:** Total amount saved during the first two weeks of August by property owners who chose to pay their taxes early and receive a 1 percent discount, authorized by the Board of Commissioners.
- **98.03:** Accuracy percentage rate maintained by the staff at the Department of Social Services for management of the Food and Nutrition Program during the 2007 fiscal year. Staff members were recognized at the state level for their commitment to providing accurate and timely food assistance benefits.
- **3:** Number of illegal dump sites reported and investigations conducted during the month of July by Solid Waste Enforcement Officer Allen Hodges.
- **11,859:** Number of citizens in Richmond County who are over the age of 55, which represents 26 percent of the total population. Richmond County Aging Services currently serves 140 meals daily to seniors at each of the Nutrition Sites, in addition to delivering 96 meals to seniors homes' daily.
- **\$324,693:** Amount saved in 2007 by clients enrolled in the Pharmacy Assistance Program, which is funded by grant sources through the Health Department.

RICHMOND READY FOR HISTORIC ELECTION

The Richmond County Board of Elections Office remains diligent in its efforts to increase the number of registered voters.

In an effort to encourage citizens to prepare for the historic 2008 election, Gov. Mike Easley proclaimed September as "Citizens Voter Registration Awareness Month."

The goal of this state-wide effort, which is also being recognized at the local level, is to provide citizens with every possible opportunity to register to vote.

In addition to registering new voters, the local office is working to update registration information from those citizens already registered.

The deadline for new voters to register and current registered voters to update their information is Friday, Oct. 10.

Registration forms are available at the Board of Elections Office, located at 221 South Hancock Street, Rocking-

ham. Voter records need to be updated if you have moved within the county; changed your name; wish to change party affiliation, or have been assigned an E-911 address.

Registration forms are also available at the following locations: the Department of Social Services; Employment Security Commission; Department of Motor Vehicles; all public libraries, and all City or Town Halls.

In order to accommodate voters, a third one-stop site for early voting will open for this election. In addition to voting at Ellerbe Town Hall, citizens may also vote on the campus of Richmond Community College at the Cole Auditorium and at the Board of Elections Office.

One-stop voting begins on Oct. 16 and continues until Nov. 1.

Any questions about registration, absentee ballots, location of polling places and any other election matters may be

answered by telephoning the Board of Elections at 997-8253.

KEY DATES

Richmond County Election officials say there are key dates citizens should keep in mind as the election nears.

- **Monday, Sept. 15** - First day to request absentee ballots by mail for the General Election;
- **Friday, Oct. 10** - Last day for new voters to register and registered voters to update their information;
- **Thursday, Oct. 16** - One-stop voting begins for the General Election;
- **Saturday, Nov. 1** - One-stop absentee voting ends;
- **Monday, Nov. 3** - Last day to receive voted ballots by mail by 5 p.m. for the General Elections, and
- **Tuesday, Nov. 4** - General Election Day.

RICHMOND COUNTY GOVERNMENT WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, SEPT. 1 IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY.

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MONTHLY MEETING WILL BE HELD MONDAY, SEPT. 8 AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE COMMISSIONERS CHAMBERS.

RICHMOND COUNTY ROUND-UP

Learn about CapTel

A consultant from CapTel will present information on the "Captioning Telephone" and its uses for deaf and hard of hearing citizens on Sept. 23 at the Ellerbe, Rockingham and Hamlet Senior Centers.

The telephone is offered with Relay North Carolina, a free service that provides full telephone accessibility to people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind and speech-disabled.

The CapTel phone is provided free to qualified applicants of all ages throughout the state.

Informational sessions will be held on Sept. 23 beginning at 10 a.m. at the Ellerbe Sen-

ior Center, and at 12:45 p.m. at the Rockingham Center. The final session will begin at 3 p.m. at the Hamlet Senior Center.

Taxes are now due

Taxes, which were due on Sept. 1, will become past due on Jan. 6.

Any resident unable to pay their taxes in full by Jan. 6 may make partial payments. The Tax Office will work with individuals who need to make payments throughout the year; however, a payment agreement must be reached prior to Jan. 6.

For more information, call the Tax Office at 997-8270.

Pay by Credit Card

Tax Payments by Credit Cards & Electronic Check

Pay your County taxes online at

www.officialpayments.com.

Pay by electronic check online at

www.officialpayments.com/echeck, or Pay by Phone at

1-800-272-9829



Anominal convenience fee is charged by Official Payments for this service. The fee is not charged by or paid to Richmond County Government. The convenience fee is assessed to cover operating costs and the costs associated with serving thousands of card transactions. For more information, call the Tax Office at 997-8270.