



# THE UNION COUNTY ADVOCATE

A Newsletter from the County Department of Human Services

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November 2015

## Veterans Day Ceremony at Warbirds



### IN THIS ISSUE...

DEPARTMENT OF  
HUMAN SERVICES  
VETERANS DAY  
CEREMONY

1

DIVISION OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES

2

DIVISION OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES  
ADOPTION CELEBRATION

3

DIVISION OF  
NUTRITION &  
TRANSPORTATION  
THE BIG CATCH

4

DIVISION OF  
VETERANS SERVICES  
VETERANS DAY

5

The Union County Veterans Service Office honored veterans at their annual Veterans Day Program on Saturday, November 7, 2015 at the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. Despite the rain, it was a great celebration of our past and future veterans.

Keynote speaker, Sergeant Major Randolph L. Mitchell, gave a moving speech, recognizing all veterans in the audience. SgtMaj Mitchell enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in March of 1980 and served for 28 years. His duty assignments included MCRD Parris Island for boot camp, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina; Fort Lee, Virginia; Fort Benning, Georgia; Bridgeport, California; Okinawa, Japan; Beaufort, SC; Miramar, CA; Camp Pendleton, CA; Camp Fuji, Japan; and Iwakuni, Japan. SgtMaj Mitchell has the distinct honor of serving as a Drill Instructor at Parris Island twice, and at MCRD San Diego, CA. SgtMaj Mitchell participated in numerous operations in support of Desert Storm.

SgtMaj Mitchell retired from the Marine Corps and relocated to Okinawa, Japan on June 30, 2008 where he continued to support the Marines through Marine Corps Community Services as a program director. His service awards include but are not limited to Meritorious Service Medal (04 awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal (09 awards), Air Force Achievement Medal. SgtMaj Mitchell currently resides with his wife Lina and daughter Angelina in Weddington.

The County presented the Annual JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) Patriot Awards to the following cadets from each of the JROTC high schools:

Forest Hills: Allison D Pressley  
Monroe: Yesenia Garcia  
CATA: Sabrina (Liat) Bell  
Parkwood: Michaela Pressley

Piedmont: Samantha Brasier  
Porter Ridge: Joanny Rodriguez  
Sun Valley: Daniel Shoemaker  
Weddington: Robert Howard, III.

A heartfelt thank you to all who attended and participated, and especially to our veterans who have served our Country!

# DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

*Phillip Tarte, Division Director*

## **Mental Health Services at the Health Department**



The Union County Health Department now offers psychotherapy and counseling services to patients in English and Spanish. Two doctoral students from UNC Charlotte, Claudia Interiano in the Counseling Ph.D. Program and Linda McWhorter in the Health Psychology Ph.D. program (pictured above), are completing their clinical training at the Health Department. They provide child, adolescent, and family therapy as well as individual and couples therapy for adults. They are excited to offer a new three week coping skills group for Spanish-speaking women, the Taller de relajación (Relaxation Workshop) in November, and plan to offer this group for English speaking patients in December or January.

The behavioral health interns provide consultation to medical providers and care coordinators on mental health and behavioral issues, provide brief interventions in the exam rooms for patients with emotional or behavioral issues, and schedule weekly psychotherapy sessions for patients who need ongoing mental health services. In addition, they link patients with appropriate community resources when needed.

These mental health services are offered free of charge to Health Department patients. Claudia and Linda are helping to meet the need of many Union County residents without health insurance, who have limited options for mental health services. The Integrative Psychotherapy Training Program (IPTP) through the Community Care Partners of Greater Mecklenburg coordinates the placement of mental health graduate student trainees in a wide variety of primary care, long term care, inpatient, and specialty clinic locations throughout Mecklenburg and Union Counties. Ms. Interiano's placement with the UCHD will end in February and Ms. McWhorter's in May or June. IPTP and the Health Department hope to recruit additional student trainees to continue to provide this important service to Union County residents.

IPTP developed from the pastoral care program through Carolinas Medical Center. As it has grown, the program has expanded to embrace trainees from a variety of mental health training programs and disciplines. The integrative services offered to patients are designed to consider the impact of both physical and mental health on patient wellbeing and functioning. The interns work together with the medical providers to help patients live the best life possible.

# DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES

*Rae Alepa, Division Director*

## Adoption Celebration 2015

November is National Adoption Awareness Month and for those of us at DSS it is a very special time of the year. On November 6, DSS Special Services Unit 1 held their 7th annual Adoption Celebration at South Piedmont Community College. This year's theme was "Mix and Mingle". It gave families who have already adopted a chance to interact with families who are waiting to adopt or in the process of becoming an adoptive family. This event also provided the DSS staff a chance to get to know the adoptive families better, and see how children who were previously on their caseloads are doing with their forever families. Delicious food was catered by Creative Concepts and there was also a DJ, karaoke, and dancing. One of our waiting adoptive families did face painting for the children which was a huge success!

Richard Matens, Executive Director, gave the Welcome and blessed the food. Rae Alepa, Director of Social Services was there with her son, as well as our Program Administrator and Program Manager. In addition there was staff in attendance from different units in Children's Services. This is a special event for the agency and especially for SSU 1. It affords us the chance to celebrate the goal of permanency and being a part of bringing the adoptive families and children together to create forever families!



## Heidi Mathis Receives Award



On Thursday, October 29th, members of Union County's multidisciplinary teams came together to honor each other and those working hard in the community to prevent abuse and maltreatment. The event was held at South Piedmont Community College. Heidi Mathis, a Social Worker within Child Protective Services was the winner of the 7th Annual Prevention and Intervention Service Award for Social Services. Even in her short time with Union County, she has stepped up and worked hard for the children and families in her caseload.

# DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION & NUTRITION

*Annette Sullivan, Division Director*

## The Big Catch



The first Annual King Mackerel tournament was hosted at Marlin Quay Marina, in Murrels Inlet, SC, on October 17th. Being the avid fisherman that the County Fleet Manager is, it is no surprise that Shan Lemmonds entered the tournament along with his son Gavin. Although the ocean was rough, Shan reported that the participation turnout was good.

Upon arriving, Shan and Gavin made the decision to “pre -fish” on the day before the tournament. Fortunately, they were not only able to locate a large amount of bait close to the beach in about 20 feet of water, but shortly after beginning to fish they “hooked up”. The fish caught on Friday was estimated to have been approximately 45 pounds.

On Saturday they returned to the same location and found that just like the day before the bait was still there. After a while of fishing they hooked what would turn out to be the winning fish. The battle to get the fish on board lasted about 30 minutes and although the fish appeared to be a bit smaller than the one caught on Friday, it was still quite large. Most of the other boats had chosen to go off shore to fish which left Shan and his son alone at their chosen location, only about 2 miles from the inlet. This made for an easy ride into the scales and they were actually the first boat to arrive to weigh in their catch. The King topped the scales at 35.05 pounds and held the lead until the end following all of the other tournament participants weighing in.

On Saturday night the marina held an awards dinner where Shan and Gavin were not only presented a huge trophy shown in the picture above, but the king “netted” another prize in the form of a large check in the amount of \$6,750.00. Needless to say the Transportation and Nutrition staff were provided a week full of smiles from Shan and we are very proud of both Shan and Gavin who will now be known as the very first to win the newly established tournament.

# DIVISION OF VETERANS SERVICES

*Michelle Marcano, Division Director*

## Veterans History: McNamara Resigns as Secretary of Defense

### Vietnam War; November 29, 1967 -

Robert S. McNamara announces that he will resign as Secretary of Defense and will become president of the World Bank.

Formerly the president of Ford Motor Company, McNamara had served as Secretary of Defense under two presidents, John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, from 1961 until 1968. He initially supported U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War and encouraged President Johnson to escalate in 1964, but he later began privately to question U.S. policy and eventually advocated a negotiated settlement to the war. In the summer of 1967, he helped draft the San Antonio formula, a peace proposal offering to end the U.S. bombing of the north and asking North Vietnam to join in productive discussions. The North Vietnamese rejected the proposal in October.

Early in November, McNamara submitted a memorandum to Johnson recommending that the United States freeze its troop levels, cease the bombing of the north, and turn over responsibility for fighting the ground war to the South Vietnamese. Johnson rejected these recommendations outright. McNamara subsequently resigned; Johnson adviser Clark Clifford succeeded him.



*TIME Magazine Cover: Robert S. McNamara -- Feb. 15, 1963*

*“Coercion, after all, merely captures man. Freedom captivates him.”  
-Robert S. McNamara*

## Veterans Day: Wednesday, November 11, 2015

According to History.com, “On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in the First World War, then known as “the Great War.” Commemorated as Armistice Day beginning the following year, November 11th became a legal federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became Veterans Day, a holiday dedicated to American veterans of all wars”.

## SAY WHAT?! MILITARY JARGON

To coincide with Thanksgiving Day, this month’s term is “**Chewing the Fat.**” “God made the vittles but the devil made the cook,” was a popular saying used by seafaring men in the 19th century when salted beef was staple diet aboard ship. This tough cured beef, suitable only for long voyages when nothing else was cheap or would keep as well (remember, there was no refrigeration), required prolonged chewing to make it edible. Men often chewed one chunk for hours, just as it were chewing gum and referred to this practice as “chewing the fat.”