

## 2006 Employee of the Month

### December Dare County Employee of the Month



Margaret Parker, Public Health Nurse II with Home Health and Hospice, was named Dare County's Employee of the Month for December 2006. Parker was recognized at the December 4, 2006 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners by Anne Thomas, Dare County Health Director.

"[Margaret] is a calm, caring and gentle nurse," Thomas said of Parker in her work with the Dare County Hospice Program.

Parker began her work with Dare County in August 2001. She is described as a wonderful teacher and mentor to the new Health Department staff and as having a wonderful work ethic.

"She has a broad range of knowledge and skills in the area of her expertise," Thomas continued. "She connects well with the patients and families she serves and often helps them through very difficult times."

"Hospice is not something everyone can do. I commend Margaret for her commitment. She ensures that quality of life standards are met. This can be as routine as advocating for medication for pain or contacting the Homebuilders Association so that someone can have a wheelchair ramp built," said Thomas.

The words of a former patient's family read from a letter perhaps summed up Parker's work the best, "You've touched us so deeply. I guess in a way I think of you as the thread that connected us to my mom. We needed you so desperately. You didn't see what was obvious to everyone else. You made us feel safe. You cared for my mom with such tenderness. I will never forget you for that."

### November Dare County Employee of the Month

County Manager, Terry Wheeler received the November Employee of the Month award.



### October Dare County Employee of the Month



Tom O'Neal, Director of Human Resources, presented the October Employee of the Month award to Maria Heifferon, Cultural Specialist for Dare County, at the October 2, 2006 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners.

Maria has been with Dare County for 21 years and provides translation services for all county departments. Her primary job is working with the Health Department interpreting during patient exams. Maria also works within the Hispanic community in Dare County to help keep them informed as well as volunteering with the court system and Hotline thrift stores.

"Maria is a true professional. She always goes where she is needed, when she is needed," said O'Neal when presenting the award. "Her hard work has earned her the respect of her coworkers and the Hispanic community."

Congratulations to Maria Heifferon, Dare County's October 2006 Employee of the Month.

### September Dare County Employee of the Month

Dare County named Julie Anderson, EMT Intermediate, the Dare County Employee of the Month for September 2006. Anderson has been with Dare County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) since 2003 when she took her first EMT course. According to Skeeter Sawyer, Public Safety Director, Anderson breezed through that course and was a natural for the job of an EMT.



"[Julie] is the type of employee everybody would wish they could have," Sawyer commented as he presented her with the award. "She knows her job and knows how to deal with people."

Julie, whose emotional reaction to receiving the award was a telling sign of her pride in her job, said to the group after receiving the award, "I truly love my job and I appreciate the opportunity to have it."

Anderson is well respected by her coworkers and supervisors as can be seen in Sawyers opening comment during the presentation, "We've been blessed to have [Julie]."

Congratulations to Julie Anderson, Dare County's September 2006 Employee of the Month.

### August Dare County Employee of the Month



Michelle Hoppman was named Dare County Employee of the Month at the July 7, 2006 Dare County Board of Commissioners meeting. Hoppman is a Registered Dietitian and Certified Diabetes Educator for the Dare County Health Department and was presented the award by Laurie White, Public Health Nursing Director for the Dare County Health Department.

Hoppman joined the Dare County Health Department on October 1, 2001, and according to White, she showed her enthusiasm from the very beginning. That enthusiasm still pervades her work almost five years later.

"She was a new college graduate when she came to us," White commented, "and the enthusiasm from then still happens now."

Hoppman has shown her enthusiasm for promoting the health of others by being on the Public Health Advisory Committee, working with the Stepping Stones Diabetes Program, volunteering at the YMCA to teach nutrition classes, working with Home Health and Hospice to aid homebound

patients, and by starting the “Snack Shack” which gives employees in the Health Department a healthy alternative to snack machines while at work.

“She is a shining example of the difference an employee can make,” White said of Hoppman during the award presentation.

Hoppman, however, gives much of the credit for her enthusiasm about her work to her co-workers.

“When you work with an enthusiastic group of people, it makes you want to do better,” said Hoppman. “I work with an amazing group of people.”

It is clear that her attitude and dedication have set her apart from the rest, and as a result Michelle Hoppman has been named Dare County’s August Employee of the Month for 2006. Congratulations to Michelle.

### July Dare County Employee of the Month



Dare County named Spencer Gregory the July 2006 Employee of the Month at the July 17 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners. Parks and Recreation Department Director, Cliff Ogburn, was at the meeting to present the award.

Gregory, Event Coordinator for the Roanoke Island Mainland Division of Dare County Parks and Recreation, joined the Parks and Recreation Department in September of 2000. He trains and educates officials and coaches and also teaches swimming lessons aside from his duties as Event Coordinator. Gregory is also the local Special Olympics Coordinator. He works with Special Olympics athletes locally to prepare them for competition both locally and on various other levels of competition.

Gregory is also a volunteer for the Friends of Youth program which helps give local children a mentor with which to spend time. His love of local youth shows even in his comments upon receiving his award.

“I love the youth of this county. It has been a pleasure to work with them,” said Gregory.

He also has a new child of his own as he has now been a father for just three weeks.

“We need more mentors like Spencer,” noted Ogburn as he presented Gregory with his plaque.

Congratulations to Spencer Gregory, Dare County’s July 2006 Employee of the Month.

### June Dare County Employee of the Month

Dare County recognized its employee of the month for June 2006 at the June 5th meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners. Beth Edens, Telecommunications Supervisor for the Sheriff’s Department, was given the award by Major Almey Gray of the Dare County Sheriff’s Department.

Edens has been a supervisor with the Communications Division of the Sheriff’s Department for 12 years. She has been formally recognized



with the Advanced Service Award and she is also given informal recognition by her co-workers and supervisors alike.

"She truly is an amazing woman," Gray told commissioners, "[She] is someone I rely on heavily."

Gray went on to tell everyone in attendance that Edens is an outstanding mother and that she will come in to work her shift even when sick because she knows how important her job is. Congratulations to Beth Edens, Dare County's June 2006 Employee of the Month.

### May Dare County Employee of the Month



At the May 1, 2006 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners, Captain John "J.J." Jones, EMT, received the Employee of the Month Certificate from Skeeter Sawyer, EMS Director.

Jones serves as a Shift Operations Supervisor for EMS and he is also the Supply Officer for EMS. As supply officer, Jones oversees the supply inventory for the entire EMS operation in Dare County. As a shift supervisor he oversees assignments and movements of EMS units during his shift. Jones is also an outstanding paramedic who helps with local EMS training, and Jones had previously worked with Dare Med Flight.

"No matter what the task, J.J. puts his whole heart into it and there is no one more deserving of the award," according to Skeeter Sawyer.

"He's fabulous in the streets," Sawyer commented of Jones, "I can't think of anybody who could do a better job."

Congratulations to John "J.J." Jones, Dare County's May 2006 Employee of the Month.

### April Dare County Employee of the Month

Christina Martin, Maternity Care Coordinator with the Dare County Health Department, was awarded the April 2006 Employee of the Month Award at the April 3rd meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners. Martin received the Employee of the Month certificate from Laurie White.

Martin began work with Dare County in 2002 when she served as Hispanic Outreach Worker for pregnant women. She later moved from that position into her current role as Maternity Care Coordinator. She is compassionate and performs everyday tasks as a mission to make everyone's life a little easier. An example of that willingness to help is her interpreting after hours at the Outer Banks Hospital. She has recently been accepted to UNC-Chapel Hill and will be realizing her goal of a career in medicine.



During the presentation to the Board of Commissioners White characterized Martin in this way, "She goes above and beyond every opportunity she can. She amazes everyone she works with."

Congratulations to Dare County's April 2006 Employee of the Month, Christina Martin.

### March Dare County Employee of the Month



Dare County Utilities Director Ken Flatt presented Jim Shimpach of the Dare County Water Department with the March 2006 Employee of the Month award at the March 20 Dare County Board of Commissioners Meeting. Shimpach is an Electrician and Instrument Control Technician for the Water Department, and he has been working for Dare County since 1994.

In his presentation before the Board of Commissioners, Flatt praised Shimpach's dedication to both his job and his community.

"He has a lot of public service in his community in Rodanthe. He works with the Chicamacomico Historical Association. [...] he also just received the lifetime achievement award from the Chicamacomico Fire Department," said Flatt of Shimpach.

According to Flatt, all Water Department employees respect Shimpach's opinion. He is a vital part of his community, and he is a great employee. Congratulations to Jim Shimpach, Dare County's March 2006 Employee of the Month.

### February Dare County Employee of the Month

Jennifer Wooten was named Dare County's Employee of the Month for February at the Dare County Board of Commissioners meeting on February 6, 2006. Wooten was presented the award by Friends of Youth Program Coordinator Bonnie Bennett.

Bennett described Wooten as, "...someone who is extremely hard working and dedicated to our program." Bennett also said of Wooten, "I'm very thankful she is my team member."

Wooten has worked for Dare County for nearly nine years as the Friends of Youth Program assistant. Wooten believes wholeheartedly in the program and was a volunteer with the program even before becoming a full time employee.



When asked what she likes best about the job, Wooten replied, "Really, it's knowing we're helping the kids. I was a volunteer before I was on staff, so I know it definitely helps. I also know that years down the road we'll be able to see the results. To be a part of that in any way is rewarding."

Wooten admits the variety in her job is also a positive motivating factor for her. As is her program coordinator, Bonnie Bennett.

"Bonnie does a great job and she is so dedicated. She makes this a good place to work," Wooten said when asked about Bennett.

Wooten has lived in Dare County for nearly 20 years. She moved here shortly after graduating from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Journalism. She currently lives in Manteo

where she has spent 15 of those years. Outside of work, Wooten is a member of a book club and enjoys biking, photography, and spending time with her family.

Congratulations to Jennifer Wooten, Dare County's February Employee of the Month.

### January Dare County Employee of the Month



Rita Pledger, Office Manager for the Sheriff's Department, was named Dare County's January Employee of the Month at the January 3, 2006 meeting of the Dare County Board of Commissioners. Rodney Midgett, Dare County Sheriff, presented Pledger with the award.

Pledger has worked for Dare County for 16 years. She maintains the record system for the Sheriff's Department and supervises five people within the office. Sheriff Midgett credits Pledger with improving many things about the operation including the implementation of new technologies.

"She drug us kicking and screaming into the computer age," Midgett said of Pledger. He also commented, "She is always striving to improve our operation and to help anyone who needs help."

As is tradition with awards such as this in Dare County Government, Pledger did not know she had won the award until it was revealed in the Commissioners meeting. "I was really surprised and very honored to receive the award," Pledger said after receiving the award. Pledger also commented on her job, "I enjoy everything about my job. It keeps me busy. I never have any time with nothing to do, and I enjoy that." Pledger lives with her husband and their four daughters in Skyco and has lived in this area all of her life.

Congratulations to Rita Pledger, Dare County's January Employee of the Month.