



Union UPDATE

December 4, 2012

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New Commissioners Take Office

Frank Aikmus and Richard Helms took their oaths of office on Dec. 3 and joined sitting commissioners Jerry Simpson, Todd Johnson and Jonathan Thomas to form Union County's new Board of Commissioners. Aikmus and Helms replaced outgoing commissioners Kim Rogers and Tracy Kuehler.



Commissioner
Frank Aikmus

Aikmus has been a resident of Union County since 2007. He grew up in a rural community in Platte County, Missouri. Aikmus graduated from Park College in Parkville, Missouri in 1995. He has spent the past 16 years of his working career in the banking and finance industry. Aikmus currently sits, as a Senate appointee, on the N.C. Debt Affordability Advisory Committee. Additionally, Aikmus has been actively involved and served on numerous community boards and groups.

With the exception of his time in the Air Force and his time moving with IBM management assignments, Commissioner Helms has been a resident of this area his entire life.



Commissioner
Richard Helms

Commissioner Helms spent 30 years with the IBM Corporation. At IBM he served in various management positions and spent the last 10 years as a Customer Service Executive responsible for computer support across the US for several of the largest banks in the country. He retired from IBM in 2000 and formed Consulting IT Professionals, a management consulting company that taught management principles and performed audits on financial facilities across the county.

The new commission re-elected Jerry Simpson as chairman for the coming year and Todd Johnson as vice-chairman.

Monthly Program Guide

Sign up to receive the Union County Public Library's monthly program guide via your email by contacting Shelley Fearn, Reader's Services Librarian, at sfearn@union.lib.nc.us.



What's Happening at the Library?

The Union County Public Library has created a new collection of paperback books! Many genres, primarily romance, are published almost exclusively in small paperback editions that librarians refer to as mass market paperbacks. This collection will be limited to new genre fiction only. The collection can be found at the Monroe, Edwards Memorial and Union West Regional libraries.

Free Movie
The Odd Life of Timothy Green
Sunday, Dec. 9 at 2:15 p.m.
Edwards Memorial Library in
Marshville

Teen Volunteers Needed
The Monroe Library needs help. Interested teens (ages 14-18) are welcome to volunteer. Email sfearn@union.lib.nc.us for more information.

Free Computer Classes
Learn more about computer classes and sign up at www.union.lib.nc.us and click on "Computer Users" or call 704-283-8184, ext. 252 or 246.

Crystal Crump Takes Oath for Third Term



Crystal Crump was sworn in for her third term as Register of Deeds of Union County on Dec. 3.

"Confederate Pensioners of Color" to be Honored on Dec. 8

The Union County Board of Commissioners on Oct. 1 passed a resolution proclaiming Saturday, Dec. 8 as "Confederate Pensioners of Color Day" in Union County.

A memorial to honor Union County's 10 pensioners of color will be dedicated on Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. in front of the Confederate Memorial located on the grounds of Union County's Historic Courthouse.

North Carolina awarded pensions as benefits to qualified Confederate veterans. It wasn't until the 1920s that the state recognized the confederate military service of men of non-white origin who were enslaved and free and began providing them pensions for the remainder of their lives. The "Pensioners of Color" were honored and respected for their wartime service and were included in many veterans' gatherings and reunions.

Union County's "Pensioners of Color" were Wilson Ashcraft, George Cureton, Aaron Perry, Ned Byrd, Hamp Cuthbertson, Jeff Sanders, Wary Clyburn, Mose Fraser, Wyatt Cunningham and Lewis McGill. These men led lives of continued service to their churches, schools and communities. They also engaged in business and trade, started families and left many descendants in Union County.

Several descendants of these men will be present at the memorial dedication as will Civil War re-enactors and guest speakers. One special guest will be Ms. Mattie Rice, the daughter of Wary Clyburn. Clyburn died at the age of 90 in 1930 when Ms. Rice was a young child.

For more information about these men, visit the Dickerson Room of the Union County Public Library in Monroe or contact Patricia Poland at 704-283-8184 ext. 224 or ppoland@union.lib.nc.us. For questions about the memorial dedication, email the Confederate

Planning Board Meeting

The Union County Planning Board will meet on Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Union County Government Center.

Adult Tutors Needed

We seek compassionate volunteers!

Would you consider tutoring an adult learner? Take the first step by attending Literacy Council 101 on one of these dates:

Jan. 14 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Feb. 20 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

For more information, contact the Literacy Council of Union County at 704-226-1425 or email info@literacyunion.org.

www.literacyunion.org

N.C. DHHS Reports First Flu Deaths of the Season

North Carolina has reported the state's first two deaths from flu for the 2012-2013 flu season. Both victims were adults from the Triad region of the state. According to State Health Director Laura Gerald, one of the individuals was at higher risk for complications from flu because of advanced age and pre-existing medical conditions but the other had no known risk factors for severe influenza illness. Neither had received the flu vaccine.



"We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of these two individuals," said Dr. Gerald. "This is a tragic reminder of the potentially devastating effect flu can have on people at any age. With flu cases on the rise in North Carolina, it is especially important for the public to take action to protect themselves and their families."

Statewide surveillance shows that flu activity is increasing in North Carolina; the number of positive flu tests recorded by the State Laboratory of Public Health has more than quadrupled since early November.

Flu vaccine is the safest and most effective way to protect against flu and is recommended for anyone over 6 months old. It is particularly important for people at high risk of complications, including pregnant women, people with chronic diseases, very young children and the elderly.

According to newly released information from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, just over 46 percent of North Carolinians were immunized against flu last year.

"Every flu season is different," Gerald said. "In addition to vaccination, we strongly encourage citizens to prevent flu and other illness by covering coughs and sneezes; washing hands frequently with soap and water; and staying home when you are sick."

Influenza kills approximately 25,000 people and causes 220,000 hospitalizations every year in the United States.

For more information about flu and to find a flu vaccine clinic near you, visit flu.nc.gov.

The November 2012 election established many new voting records for Union County, including largest number of voters (95,382), largest number of early voters (60,377), second largest number to vote at precincts on election day (35,005) and largest number of registered voters (135,842). Union County is ninth among counties in North Carolina for the number of voter registrations.



COMPARISONS

2012	NOV. 2008	NOV.
Registered Voters	120,514	135,842
Turnout (70.2%)	86,949 (72.2%)	95,382
Early Voting	51,918	54,466
Absentee by Mail	5,739	5,911
Election Day	29,292	35,005
Registrations		
Democratic	38,419	39,716
Republican	53,301	58,778
Libertarian	86	424
Unaffiliated	28,708	36,924

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