



PILOT LIGHT: Tax Rate Climbs In 25 Counties

Moore County was not alone in raising its property tax rate this year.

The N.C. Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) reports that 25 counties increased their tax rates for the 2008-09 fiscal year. The association says this is the smallest number of counties with increases since 1998-99, when the number dropped below 20 counties.

Six counties decreased their rates this year.

The association used a county's published revenue neutral rate when calculating changes in counties undergoing property revaluation. This did not apply to Moore County, which underwent revaluation in the previous year.

Moore County increased

its property rate by 2.9 cents but lowered the Advanced Life Support (ALS) tax by half a cent, bringing the total tax rate to 50.4 cents per \$100 property valuation. The increase, which many had expected to be much higher, reflects the sale of bonds for capital improvements in the public schools and at Sandhills Community College. In November voters approved \$69.5 million in education bonds.

Twenty counties have lower rates than Moore County, although the number would be lower if the ALS tax were deducted. The chart provided by NCACC does not include taxes other than the base property tax rate.

DEMOCRATS -- The Moore County Democratic Party Executive Committee will meet this Monday at 7 p.m. at party headquarters, 104 North McNeill St., Carthage.

Voters in the northern part of the county will have an opportunity to meet Betty Mangum, Democratic candidate for state House District 52, on Tuesday, July 22. The event will be held from 4:30 until 6 p.m. at the home of Carolyn McDermott and Fred Shuker, 135 Blue Hen Lane in Star. The area is known as the Spies community.

Interested persons can call 948-9996 for directions or additional information.

Mangum is the only Moore County Democratic candidate for partisan office whose name will appear on the general election ballot in November. A Pinehurst resident, Mangum is a former member of the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

COBLE -- More accolades came the way of Congressman Howard Coble this week when he broke a Republican record for North Carolina representation in the U.S. House of Representatives.

On Tuesday, Coble exceeded the record of former Sen. Jim Broyhill as the Tar Heel Republican serving the longest period in the House. Coble, whose home is in Greensboro, has served the 6th District since 1984.

Coble was recognized for this achievement on the House floor Tuesday.

In his response, Coble told fellow House members that his district, among other distinctions, is home to the "golf capital of America."

Chairwoman Linda Daves of the North Carolina Republican Party issued a statement congratulating Coble on his historic achievement.

"Since the time of his first election to Congress, he has provided stalwart conservative leadership in Washington," Daves said. "He has also been a visionary on copyright laws and technological issues. Congressman Coble's tireless service on behalf of his constituents has become well-known throughout the 6th District and helped him to gain reelection 11 times."

FOOD SERVICE -- One other honor for Coble came from the International Foodservice Distributors Association (IFDA), which presented him with the 2008 Thomas Jefferson Award.

The award honors lawmakers for their commitment to the nation's economic prosperity and to free enterprise.

"The food service industry is an important part of our nation's economy and touches every American," said Mark S. Allen, IFDA president and CEO. "With the current challenges of high fuel costs and rising food prices, sound policy toward American business is more important than ever. The Thomas Jefferson Awards are our way of recognizing lawmakers who support family-owned businesses and policies that strengthen the foodservice distribution industry."

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