



Nutrition · Education · Connection

General Newsletter

“Food for Thought”

March 2025

Message from the Executive Director

At the beginning of a New Year, I pick 3 words as our theme for the year. The words are used as a fresh filter for the mission.

Our theme for 2024: Celebrate, Laugh, Rest

- **Celebrate Service**
- **Laughter is good Medicine**
 - **Rest in Him**

It is important to always celebrate the opportunity to serve, remind ourselves that laughter is the best medicine and rest in our heavenly Father to lead us in this great work.

One of our big projects for January was to create and deliver a comprehensive **Annual Report** for 2024. We were able to publish a first class publication with the help of Judy Hills, Editor and Anita Cook, Copy and Print Warehouse and the tracking detail from, Marcy Hoffman, Administrative Coordinator. We continue to be blessed with incredible talent. Click [here](#) to check out the 2024 Annual Report.

January and February was the kick off for the Healthy for Living Cooking Class led by Dr. Lisa Yanni, DC from Trenton. Each month, Dr. Yanni meets with 10 of her patients and shares nutrition education on how to heal your body. We are grateful for the United Way of Coastal Carolina grant to help support this program.

The Food Pantry continues to assist in filling needs here in Jones County. Each week we are serving residents from Pollocksville, Trenton, Maysville, Comfort, Long Point and a few from surrounding counties. Partners such as Jones County DSS,

Jones County Schools and church partners make referrals to bridge gaps for clients. Our January data report shows only 1% of all households visit each time the food pantry is open and 40% of households visit once a month. The total number of households served in January was 715 and 777 in February with volunteer hours totaling 344 and 342 respectively.

New Bern Amateur Radio Club, our in-house partner, is providing **Ham Radio Education** for 22 people earning their technician license. We are partnering with Jones County Emergency Management to provide this important education. Click [here](#) to learn more about WHY Ham Radio is important.

February was Heart Health Month highlighting our partnership with the American Heart Association. We hosted a Mid-Day Mingle for the New Bern Chamber of Commerce and over 45 people were in attendance. We are grateful to partner with N.C. Cooperative Extension, Food Bank and LifePlus to deliver nutrition education. For more information on LifePlus, click [here](#).

The Filling Station was invited to the Heart Ball in New Bern to honor the partnership. Thank you Erin Fox and Margaret Sharp for your support!

Leadership Jonesgrassroots leadership academy kicked off Feb 24th with 9 participants. We are grateful to Chick-Fil-A and State Employees Credit Union for leading the way with funding for this 3 year project. There are additional opportunities to provide sponsorship. Thank you to Duke Energy for 2025 support. Leadership Jones graduates are seeking more leadership opportunities throughout the county and expanding their career possibilities. Thank you again to Tharesa Lee for leading this program.

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Column Continued

"Bridging Communities" makes us stronger. We are ONLY 8 weeks away from the **Neuse River Bridge Run** which helps The Filling Station keep "running". Over 500 runners have already registered and sponsorships are up 75% from last year. We are excited that Jones County Recreation is working with the students to get involved for their health and give back to local nonprofits. Thank you David Mallard, Director of Jones County Recreation. To register to run or volunteer at the Bridge Run, click [here](#) or scan the QR code below.

BIG THANK YOU to Cypress Creek Renewables for being the Title Sponsor for the 2025 Neuse River Bridge Run!

Nutrition, Education and Connection for the residents of Jones County . . . all made possible as we stand on our Core Values: Christ Focused, Equip, Empower, Encourage and Educate (2022-2025 Strategic Plan)



Mary Ann LeRay

Executive Director

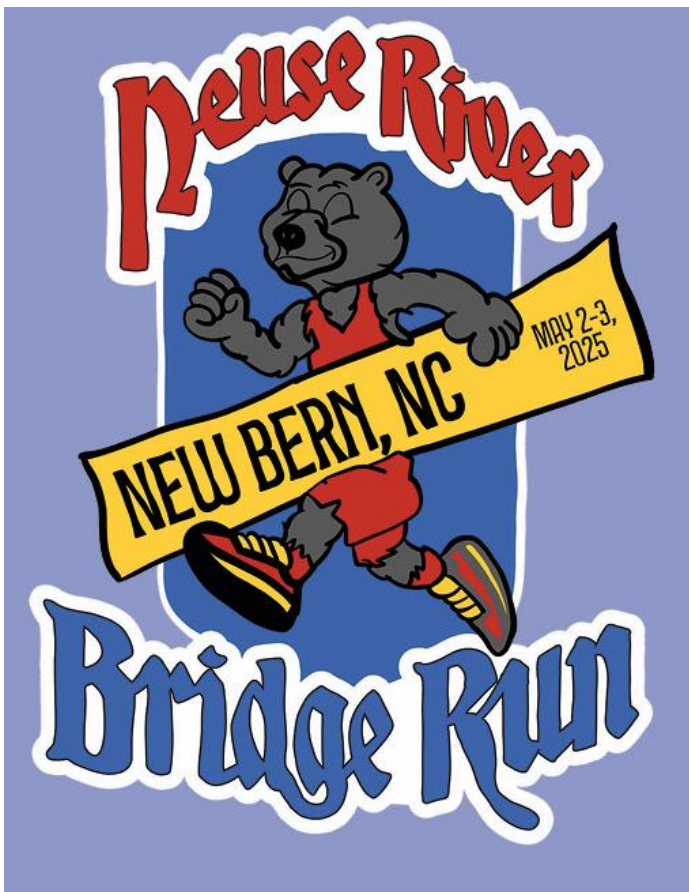
The Filling Station, Inc.

"Nutrition, Education and Connection"

fillingstation1075.com

252-224-1127

To book a tour or speaking engagement, please email: fsdirector@fillingstation1075.com



Friday, May 2, 2025

SuperKids Fun Run

Kids ages 3 to 12 gather at Union Point Park beginning at 4 pm. Races start at 5:30 p.m. Music, games, T-shirts, participation medals and treats!

Registration 5K, 10K, & Half Marathon and Welcome Expo
4:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Register, pickup bibs and swag, and meet our sponsors.
Join us at the Riverfront Convention Center of Craven County.

Saturday, May 3, 2025

Registration and Pick-Up continues for
5K, 10K, & Half Marathon - 6:00 to 8:00 a.m.
Riverfront Convention Center

Half Marathon Start - 7:00 a.m.
10K Start - 7:30 a.m. 5K Start - 8:15 a.m.
Union Point Park / East Front Street

Runner's Celebration - 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.



The Filling Station at Mid-Day Mingle



Bobby Darden, Board Chair & Willie Smith, Treasurer

Thank you **New Bern Chamber of Commerce** for partnering with us and **American Heart Association** in hosting February Mid-Day Mingle! Approximately 45 people attended the event.



Joe Brown, Joe Brown Band

NEW BERN
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Midday Mingle

WED, Feb. 12, 2025 12 noon- 1 pm

THE FILLING STATION
221 MAIN STREET • POLLOCKSVILLE, NC 28573



Thank you John and Brenda Hall for making Valentine lunch boxes complete with chocolate covered strawberries.



Jill Thompson, Executive Director, Weisser Foundation



Meredith Edminster, ED for Atlantic Dance Theatre



Theresa Lee, Facilitator for Leadership Jones, and friends



Bethany Richards, Bike Box Project for Parkinson's

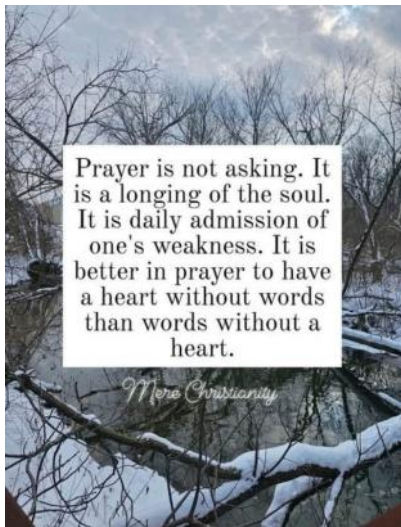
Around the The Filling Station



Sarah Ware, NC Cooperative Extension/Jones County, leading a Sourdough Class in the Teaching Kitchen.



NEW Recording Studio is up and running - Videos from the Teaching Kitchen and Podcast coming soon!



Prayer is not asking. It is a longing of the soul. It is daily admission of one's weakness. It is better in prayer to have a heart without words than words without a heart.

Mere Christianity



Food Pantry food box- Thank you to Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC for your support!



Even on the coldest of days, our volunteers are committed to serve - Thank you Julia Murphy!

Around the The Filling Station



Thank you Christ Church for delivering an anonymous donation of \$50,000 to support the mission of feeding our neighbors.



Thank you Neuse Regional Library for partnering and sharing information with clients.



Willona Aekins from The Camber Foundation visits the Filling Station to learn more about the mission and to tour the campus.



Thank you Jones County Hunters Association for donating \$500 to the mission

The Filling Station's New Warehouse



The Vision of a New Warehouse is becoming a reality. We are planning for it to be fully operational by late spring. Thank you Goldenleaf Foundation, Bate Foundation, Duke Energy and all the church partners for making this possible.



Volunteer Highlight



Norma taking her blood pressure

Norma McDonough was born in Puerto Rico, studied at Radford College, VA and was married to Air Force guy. She has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, one of them is a special needs young man. Norma also volunteers with the special needs baseball program. She began volunteering at a base hospital and was a volunteer interpreter at the World Special Olympics in Raleigh. Another program that got the benefit of Norma’s time was the Guardian at Litem Program in Wayne County. Norma is also member of the Human Rights Committee at Cherry Hospital and the O’Berry Neurological Center in Goldsboro. She was the 2017 recipient of the Governor’s Volunteer Award in Goldsboro. Norma moved to New Bern and was looking for a volunteer opportunity when she met Carol Mattocks. Carol immediately recommended that Norma contact The Filling Station. “I feel blessed that I can help others,” said Norma when asked why she volunteers with The Filling Station. Norma was honored at the 7 year anniversary with over 250 hours of volunteer service.

Did you know you can apply online to be part of our volunteer team? Our volunteers are our greatest asset and it is our goal to provide orientation and training to everyone associated with The Filling Station. Want to volunteer? Complete an application here: <https://fillingstation1075.com/volunteer-application-form/> and we will schedule your training to get plugged in.

Board Member Highlight

Board Member - Greg Thornburg

After 20 years as a maintenance team leader for BSH Home Appliances, I realized that I wanted to do more and give more and serve God while I do it. I was a member of Trinity United Methodist for over 40 years and have now participated in the organization and leadership of Solid Rock Global Methodist Church. I have served as the president of the Global Methodist Men’s group for the last 2 years. I feel God pulling me to serve and lead others throughout my community. Through connectional relationships with several of the others involved in the Filling Station, I have no doubt that God is putting me into their mission. I’m excited to see how he uses me and my gifts to further his kingdom and leads me in new directions. My wife, Heather, who serves in several leadership positions in the nonprofit community serves along side me along with our two children, Molly and Jack. We believe in servant leadership and participating in helping the communities we live in.



The Filling Station at Pollocksville Elementary School



Principal Kirschner invited Mary Ann to the Leader of the Month breakfast in January. Mary Ann shared how *The Filling Station* uses a "win-win approach" in building a team to serve the community.

"The Wheels on the Bus" song was used to share how volunteers, donors, programs and community center approach are the 4 WHEELS that keep the organization moving.



The Filling Station at The Heart Ball



Jim and Marcy Hoffman, Jeremy and Mary Ann LeRay represented The Filling Station

Thank you to the American Heart Association for inviting The Filling Station to be part of the 2025 Heart Ball at The Maola at Riverside in New Bern.



The Filling Station represented the "EQUITY" chamber of the heart.

The Filling Station in the Snow

First snow photos of The Filling Station with over 6 inches in Pollocksville



SNOWFALL TOTALS	
THIS MORNING	
Ocracoke	8.3"
Lowland	8.4"
Indian Beach	6.0"
Jacksonville	6.0"
Pollocksville	6.0"
Fountain	2.3"



Filling Station Executive Director, Mary Ann LeRay with her husband



The Filling Station Continuing Education

Network Engagement Webinar with Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC



Six Partner Network Values:

- 1) Neighbor-Focus
- 2) Food Bank Engagement
- 3) Distribution
- 4) Compliance
- 5) Capacity
- 6) Partnerships

Our Food Pantry team received 15 hours of continued education to enhance our partnership as we continue to look for ways to be more efficient in our operations.



Nutrition · Education · Connection

Our mission is to assist with filling the unmet needs in the areas of nutrition, education and connection serving the residents of Jones County.

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[Facebook.com/FS1075](https://www.facebook.com/FS1075)

Board Members

Chair: Bobby Darden

Vice-Chair: Clyde Murphy

Treas: Willie Smith

Secretary: Beverly Collins

Emily Andrews

Ellis Banks

Sheron Bender

Charley Jones

Colby Jordan

Ella McDaniel

Michael Pretty

Christopher Rogerson

Kenneth Spivey

Estelle Surles

John Taylor

Greg Thornburg

Carol Mattocks, Board Advisor

Tharesa Lee, Consultant

Mary Ann LeRay, Ex. Dir.

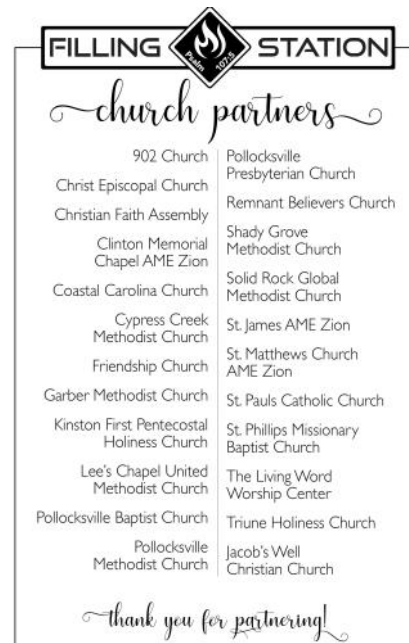
Holly Ladner, Editor

You Make Difference!

In February, we received a phone call from one of our partnering churches asking for connections on how to help someone in need. We placed a call to the woman who was requesting help. Due to a series of unfortunate events, she and her 2 children were being evicted from their home. **The Filling Station** connected with another church partner who was able to provide 3 nights housing in a local hotel. Through a series of phone calls, The Filling Station has been able to identify other needs and make the connections to support this neighbor in need.

The POWER of CONNECTION

The Filling Station is supported through Time, Talent and Treasure from our church partners.



If you would like to be part of making powerful connections like this story, we invite you to scan the QR Code or visit:

fillingstation1075.com/donate



The Filling Station, a dream born out of a long vacant, propane company building, opened its doors on August 28, 2017. Why the Filling Station name? During a walk-through of the building, someone noticed a red hazardous material warning sign with a flame and the number 1075, the DOT classification for propane. The group discovered that Psalm 107:5 read: "They were hungry and thirsty; their lives were slipping away." A new mission was launched and it was called "The Filling Station" to refer to the building's prior use as well as to its new purpose. Our mission is to assist with filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education, and Connection serving the residents of Jones County.