



Nutrition · Education · Connection

General Newsletter

“Food for Thought”

September 2025

Message from the Executive Director

Our theme for 2025: Celebrate, Laugh, Rest

Celebrate Service
Laughter is good Medicine
Rest in Him

These words are used as a fresh filter for the mission. It is important to always celebrate the opportunity to serve, remind ourselves that laughter is the best medicine and to rest in our heavenly Father to lead us in this great work.

Board of Directors Training

Our Board of Directors enjoyed a ½ day annual training held at the *New Bern Hilton*. The board of directors reviewed the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and agreed we are moving in the right direction and approved for 2026-2029. We are grateful for *Theresa Lee, Intentional Excellence*, for leading this training with an emphasis on “servant leadership”.

Back to School Bash

This is the 5th year The Filling Station has served on this committee with *Jones County Recreation and Girls Scouts - NC Coastal Pines* bringing the “back to school” kick off event. Over 250 backpacks filled with snacks were given to the students as they entered the event. Numerous vendors were on site handing out school supplies as students visited each booth. Funds from the *Neuse River Bridge Run* helped to make this Back to School event a success.

Summer Challenge

New this Summer - Summer Challenge with *N.C. Cooperative Extension Jones/Onslow County* - 39 participants engaged in the virtual summer challenge answering questions, completing surveys, achieving tasks while learning the importance of nutrition. The top 3 winners earned prizes to enhance their home kitchens. Also in the Teaching Kitchen - *Dr. Lisa Yanni, D.C.* leading “Let’s Cook Healthy Together” with 9 participants. Thank you to *United Way of Coastal Carolina* for the continued support.

The NEW Warehouse

The New Warehouse Project is **COMPLETE!** Ribbon Cutting will be held on Monday, Sept 8th at 11 AM. Please RSVP to

fsdirector@fillingstation1075.com if you plan to

attend. This project will allow for the expansion of capacity, preservation of food and opportunities for additional partnerships to serve Jones County. Thank you to *GoldenLeaf Foundation, Harold Bate Foundation, Jones County Committee of 100* and church partners who have invested in this project.

Amateur Radio Club

The Amateur Radio Course has been a huge success. These skills using Ham Radio are especially important in times of disaster when communications are impacted. This course was made possible by partnerships with *New Bern Amateur Radio Club* and *Jones County Emergency Management*. The technician course will kick off Oct 4, 2025 : <https://fillingstation1075.com/amateur-radio-license-class-information/>

Continued on p. 2

Column Continued

Leadership Jones

Leadership Jones is kicking off Cohort 6 on September 22, 2025. Thank you to Jones County and many other organizations for recommending staff to take this local leadership training. This leadership academy has been made possible through funding from *Chick-Fil-A* and *State Employees Credit Union, Duke Energy, LifePlus Foundation* and many church partners. The application period is open until September 10th. If you know of anyone who works and/or serves in Jones County, this is an incredible opportunity. For more information: <https://fillingstation1075.com/leadership-jones-grassroots-leadership-academy/>

You're Invited! "A Perfect 10" - Nov.8

The Board of Directors and I are thrilled to see the programming happening after so much planning and partnering. We appreciate your continued support through your time, talent and treasure. You are cordially invited to attend our Annual Event on Sat, Nov. 8th, from 11 am - 2 pm to raise awareness and funds for the mission: <https://fillingstation1075.com/jones-county-a-perfect-10-event/>

Our Goal is \$70,000 and we are on track to hit the mark due to the challenge grant from Anonymous Trust. If you haven't donated to The Filling Station in the last 18 months, your donation counts DOUBLE.

NEW LOCATION for the Perfect 10 this year -
The Filling Station Campus

221 Main Street
Pollocksville

We are excited to offer a wide variety of activities for our community and tourists to enjoy on November 8th - BBQ Lunch in the Garden, Cloggers and Music, Country Games, Coffee and Canvas Drop in Painting, Bake Sale, RED FARMALL PHOTO BOOTH, and educational opportunities with the *New Bern Amateur Radio Club* and *Forest Service*.

Thank you for your partnership and investing in the mission as we assist in filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education and Connection serving the residents of Jones County. You make a difference!

Mary Ann LeRay



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

***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
Educate***

(2022-2025 Strategic Plan)



Nutrition · Education · Connection

Board of Directors



2025 Annual Board Training for The Board of Directors held at the Doubletree Hilton Riverfront, New Bern, NC on Sat, July 19, 2025.

So grateful for the time, talent and treasure of these board members who "stand in the gap", connect people and resources as we serve Jones County.



Thank you Theresa Lee Intentional Excellence Consulting for leading the training as we reviewed the Strategic Plan, SCOT



Celebrating the **Neuse River Bridge Run** check presenta-



Thank you to our board member, Shelia Meadows, for representing the Filling Station at **National Night Out** in the **Town of Maysville**.

National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign to promote police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie.



Thank you to all of our local law-enforcement! We appreciate you!

Community

Joint Leadership Meeting July 29, 2025, Jones County Civic Center

Town of Trenton, Town of Pollocksville, & Town of Maysville coming together to create an even more beautiful place to live, work and worship.



Thank you Kyle Smith, our Jones County NC county manager, for inviting **The Filling Station** to present an overview of the mission and Cohort 5 Leadership Jones Tharesa Lee to present their project "Jones County Be".



Patrick Woodie, NC Rural Center shared about all the great work throughout the state of N.C. cultivating leadership, advocacy, capital and engagement.

John Bender, Jones County Economic Development shared possible solutions as Jones County grows.

Adrian Smith, Jones County Health Department shared about new strategies and priorities in education responding to opioid crisis.

Sheriff, Matt Weinman, Jones County Sheriff's Office shared overdoses are "down".

Community

Hurricane Community Forum, Jones County Civic Center



Thank you US National Weather Service Newport/Morehead City NC, Jones County Emergency Services, CCDRA—Coastal Carolina Disaster Resiliency Agency, and Duke Energy for partnering to fill the room to hear how to prepare and stay connected in hurricane season.

Stay prepared, informed and connect with your community.

Community Spotlight

The Filling Station's Heartfelt Impact—

Empowering Service Through HR Excellence

At the heart of Jones County, The Filling Station stands as a beacon of hope and compassion. Rooted in the vision of Psalm 107:5, this faith-based nonprofit provides nourishment, both physical and spiritual, to those in need. Through food distribution, education, and fellowship, it embodies the call to “Love thy Neighbor.”



Marie Mynster, Human Resources Specialist, recently partnered with Mary Ann to strengthen the organization’s HR functions. Reflecting on the experience, Marie shared:

“Working alongside Mary Ann to enhance the HR functions at the Filling Station was a true privilege. This remarkable organization is a shining example of what it means to 'Love thy Neighbor', they work closely with partners to assist and bridge gaps by empowering, encouraging, equipping those most in need within our community with a faith-based approach. By acting locally and thinking globally, the Filling Station continues to inspire through its unwavering commitment to service and compassion.”

(This was a pro bono project in partnership with Western NC University where Marie received her Masters in Human Resources.)

Community



We enjoyed supporting **N.C. Farm Bureau** at Jones County Field Fest on Aug 2, 2025

Thank you to our amazing volunteers and board members for your continued support of partnership events.

5th Annual Back to School Bash

Jones County NC Recreation Jones County Civic Center



Did you know?

Over 50 people have now earned their **HAM RADIO** license through the education at

The Filling Station

New Class begins Oct 4th
for Technician License (for beginners).

Click [here](#) for more info & to register.



Thank you

[Jones County Emergency Services](#) and [New Bern Amateur Radio Club](#)
for partnering to provide this education.

HAM RADIO ...
...Getting the Message Through
for your Family & Community!

When your Cell Phones Won't Work... Our Radio's Will!

AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE CLASS

The Filling Station in partnership with the New Bern Amateur Radio Club will be holding a Ham Radio Licensing Class for the beginner. No previous radio or electronics knowledge is required. The class is open to all ages and will prepare the students for the Technician Amateur Radio License exam. Currently there is NO Morse Code required for any Amateur Radio License. The course covers the basic regulations, operating practices and electronic theory.

The class is free but the student should purchase the ARRL Ham Radio License Manual 5th Edition Study Guide for Technician Class license. The Study Guide can be purchased from Amazon or the ARRL book store at [www.arrl.org](#).

October 4th Session 1, Chapter 1: Welcome to Amateur Radio 1 Session 1, Chapter 2: Radio and Signals Fundamentals 2	November 1st Session 5, Chapter 6: Communicating with Other Hams 6
October 11th Session 2, Chapter 3: Electricity, Components and Circuits 3	Friday, November 7th (Time: 6pm to 8pm) Session 6, Chapter 7: Licensing Regulations 7 Session 6, Chapter 8: Operating Regulations 8
October 18th Session 3, Chapter 4: Propagation, Antennas, and Feed Lines 4	November 15th Session 7, Chapter 9: Safety 9
October 25th Session 4, Chapter 5: Amateur Radio Equipment 5	November 15th Test Session (following class) 12:00 Noon - Filling Station, Pollocksville FCC Sanctioned Testing \$16 for the test - Dictated by the ARRL \$35 to the FCC for license processing once you pass the test

All classes are from 10AM - Noon

*ALL CLASSES WILL BE TAUGHT AT
THE FILLING STATION, 221 MAIN STREET POLLOCKSVILLE, NC 28573

Craven Literacy Council

Volunteer Tutor Training Workshop

Craven Literacy Council is offering a free workshop to train volunteer tutors to work with adults who need basic literacy skills, or who want to speak and understand English. The 15-hour workshop will provide participants with teaching techniques & materials that will prepare them to tutor with the Council.

September 30, October 2, 7 & 9
Time: 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

September 30, October 2, 7 & 9
with a Follow-up November 18
Tuesdays & Thursdays

To Register: Call 252-637-8079, email james.chesson@cravenliteracy.org or visit our website www.cravenliteracy.org for more information!

2507-F Neuse Blvd. New Bern, NC
252-637-8079 www.cravenliteracy.org



We have a tutoring program with the great support of retired teachers and partnerships like

Craven Literacy Council

to provide training to anyone who has a heart to serve in our schools. Tutor Training is coming up:

Visit cravenliteracy.org to reserve your spot.

New Warehouse



221 Main Street – Post Office Box 222
Pollocksville, NC 28573
(252) 224-1127
www.fillingstation1075.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Bobby Darden
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Willie Smith

Kenneth Spivey

Greg Thornburg

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mary Ann LeRay

Ribbon Cutting for New Warehouse

You are cordially invited to join us for the
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the New Warehouse
Project supporting the Food Pantry program.

Monday, September 8, 2025

at 11:00 AM

Please RSVP by email: fsdirector@fillingstation1075.com
252-224-1127

Location:

221 Main Street, Pollocksville
(behind MAIN building)

Leadership Jones

Grassroots Leadership Academy

Application for our Fall 2025 class is now OPEN!

LEADERSHIP JONES

...A GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Take Your Seat at the Table

— A 6-WEEK LEADERSHIP CLASS —

APPLY ONLINE TODAY! Fillingstation1075.com

An opportunity for Jones County residents, local government, non-profits and faith-based leaders to develop key leadership skills

TOPICS INCLUDE: Effective Communication, Personal Branding, Servant Leadership, & Bridging Communities
Led by Theresa Chadwick Lee, Program Facilitator

**FIRST SESSION STARTS
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 AT 8:30AM**

The Filling Station, 221 Main Street, Pollocksville, NC

* Applicants will be notified (email/phone) 2 weeks before class begins *

"Through our grant program, Chick-Fil-A helps empower local nonprofits that are leading positive change and creating tangible impact throughout the communities they serve," said Brent Fielder, Senior Director of Corporate Social Responsibility.

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." -John Maxwell



FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THARESA CHADWICK LEE
at 252-349-6212 | tharesalee@gmail.com

A COUNTY WIDE MISSION

Scan QR
FOR MORE
INFORMATION





Save the Date

TITLE SPONSORS



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025 | 11AM-2PM

The Filling Station fundraiser,

"Jones County–A Perfect 10"

We are planning a time of fellowship with a lunchtime meal to raise funds and awareness of The Filling Station and our community.

WE ARE "FILLING NEEDS"

We will be asking for support through voluntary donations.

The event will be held at The Filling Station Campus

221 Main Street, Pollocksville, NC

ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

*Barbeque Lunch in the Garden Venue, Cloggers and Music, Bake Sale,
Drop in Painting on canvas, Red Farmall Tractor Photo Booth, country games
Educational opportunities: Ham Radio and Forest Service Trailers on site*

*Visit fillingstation.1075 or call Karen
at 252-635-0828 for more information*



A County Wide Mission: Nutrition, Education & Connection



Click here
to
download
the
Perfect 10
Sponsor
Form

A Perfect 10 Event

"Jones County – A Perfect 10"



• ENTER TO WIN A •
**PRIME RIB / SHRIMP &
GRITS–DINNER FOR 10**
\$10 each | 5 for \$40

A chance to win a special dinner for you and 9
of your friends to be served a 5-course meal
by The Filling Station Board of Directors



PROCEEDS ARE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE FILLING STATION. PAYMENTS ARE
NOT DEDUCTIBLE AS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS. DRAWING WILL BE
HELD ON NOVEMBER 8, 2025 NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN

Visit www.fillingstation1075.com for more information.



The Filling Station is excited to announce the return of our

"Jones County – A Perfect 10" Raffle!

This year's grand prize is an unforgettable dining experience for you and nine of your guests — a five-course **Prime Rib and Shrimp & Grits** dinner, prepared and served by The Filling Station Board of Directors.

Tickets are just \$10 each or 5 for \$40, giving you multiple chances to win this incredible evening of food, fellowship, and community celebration. Proceeds from the raffle directly benefit The Filling Station's programs, helping us continue our mission to fill unmet needs in Nutrition, Education, and Connection for Jones County residents.

The winning ticket will be drawn on November 8, 2025. You do not need to be present to win.

Click [**HERE**](#) to get your tickets today and support a great cause!

Cooperative Extension

Jones & Onslow Family and Consumer Science Program of NC State Extension

is hosting a Seminar at

[The Filling Station](#)

on September 11th at 10 am

MUST PRE-REGISTER

Click [here](#) to register



HEALTHY HOMES
LEARN 8 PRINCIPLES TODAY!

REGISTER AT:
[HTTPS://GO.NCSU.EDU/HEALTHY_HOMES](https://go.ncsu.edu/healthy_homes)

Questions can be directed to Sarah Ware at 252-448-9621 or by email: sarah_ware@ncsu.edu

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  

N.C. Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity provider. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, N.C. Cooperative Extension will accept requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Please direct accommodation requests to Sarah Ware at sarah_ware@ncsu.edu or 252-448-9621. Requests can be served more effectively if notice is provided at least 30 days before the event.

FCS Family Challenge: Summer Edition Wrap-Up



FCS FAMILY CHALLENGES
SUMMER EDITION

Participate in our weekly challenges in our Jones & Onslow FCS Family Facebook Group to earn points!

EVERY MONDAY: JUNE 23RD - AUGUST 4TH, 2025

Thanks to The Filling Station and United Way, the top 3 participants will win a grand prize!

GRAND PRIZES

Visit our website for more info: www.go.ncsu.edu/FCSFamilyChallenge-Summer

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION    

N.C. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

The FCS Family Challenge: Summer Edition successfully concluded with 39 participants engaging in weekly food and nutrition-based challenges. Sponsored by United Way and The Filling Station, top prizes included a refurbished KitchenAid mixer, a dehydrator, and a chef's knife.

Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many noting lasting behavior changes such as:

- "I've started reading the label now when I go to the store."
- "Trying to make our meals more rounded."
- "Found great recipes on the Med website I'll continue using."
- "Being more mindful of getting enough fruits and veggies."
- "Incorporating healthier cooking methods and more vegetables." 100% of participants said they would recommend the program to others and would participate in a similar program again in the future.

Volunteering



Thank you **Cypress Creek Methodist Church** for your partnership. Time, Talent and Treasure...they do an amazing job of assisting in filling unmet needs.

Odyssey Day hosting the Seniors from **The Epiphany School of Global Studies**. The Filling Station so appreciates the support through volunteer hours every year. These amazing young people bring energy, creativity and excitement for the future.



Want to be part of our volunteer team?

Our volunteers are our greatest asset. We will provide an orientation and all the training you need to begin volunteering at the Filling Station.

Click [here](#) to go to the volunteer application to get signed up today!

Volunteer Highlight

Turco Family

Lexington, KY



Thank you to Turco family from KY for serving in the food pantry. This is their second time vacationing in [Jones County NC](#) seeking places to give back.



Board Member Highlight

Sheila Meadows

Triune Holiness Church



"Although I have not been an official volunteer of The Filling Station, I have always felt connected to it since the first day. My husband and his entire family worked at Jenkins Gas for many years. I remember visiting this building many times while it was in business. I also helped my husband to clean it out prior to the Filling Station being formed in 2018 just before hurricane Florence. When Florence came, it inundated my childhood home in New Bern with over 3 feet water. It was devastating for me after we had just renovated that home and it was providing much needed rental income. It was heart-breaking time for not only me, but for so many of my friends in Pollocksville, to see them lose everything they had and to see their spirits sink so low.

Then along came The Filling Station, Mary Ann would do Facebook live posts, offering much needed encouragement during such a dark time. It was so touching and offered a ray of hope and help to all those that were hurting so badly. The Filling Station has come a long way since then and continues to be a beacon of light for so many. I am humbled to be asked to serve and hope that I can bring something positive to the table so The Filling Station can continue to thrive."

Recording Studio

We are excited to share with you our ***NEW podcasts.***

In each episode, we interview partners, supporters, and volunteers who have been part of building The Filling Station.

Please visit our [website](#) to view all the episodes.



Episode #11: Holly Williford

Join host Mary Ann as she sits down with Holly Williford, a dynamic Girl Scouts staff member whose passion for community connection has helped create something truly special. You'll discover how Girl Scouts is breaking down barriers by bringing programming directly into schools, serving 80+ students during the school day, and how a simple conversation about a whiteboard sparked the creation of the now-legendary Jones County Back to School Bash.



Episode #12: Melanie Avery

Did you know that when you hear "Farm Bureau," there's so much more happening than just insurance? Today, we're talking with Melanie Avery, a 12-year veteran of the Jones County Farm Bureau, who reveals how this local non-profit is investing membership dollars directly back into scholarships, FFA programs, 4-H initiatives, and community events that matter most to Jones County families.



Episode #13: Kirk Ronzheimer

In Episode #13 of the Filling Station Podcast, discover how one chaplain's global perspective is revolutionizing local education and creating measurable community impact. This isn't just another feel-good story about volunteering- it's a blueprint for an authentic partnership that has generated over \$50,000 in documented community value. Mary Ann LeRay welcomes Kirk Ronzheimer, Chaplain at Epiphany School of Global Studies, for a conversation about their remarkable five-year partnership.



Episode #14: Jacob Morgan

In this episode of The Filling Station Podcast, host Mary Ann LeRay welcomes Jacob Morgan, executive director of NC Carolina Cooperative Extension – Jones County Center, for a conversation about the upcoming Jones County Heritage Festival. Together, they highlight the festival's exciting lineup-from parades, pageants, and car shows to unique competitions like the Toast Chee eating contest-while also exploring the important role of the extension office in community education and the creation of the Filling Station's teaching kitchen.

Food Pantry



Serving over 200 households each week with over 300 volunteer hours each month.

So appreciate Lyle Bailey from **American Red Cross** who serves with us each month if not deployed on disaster response. Thank you Thomas Hamill who is serving with us this summer.

Youth volunteer numbers are on the rise.



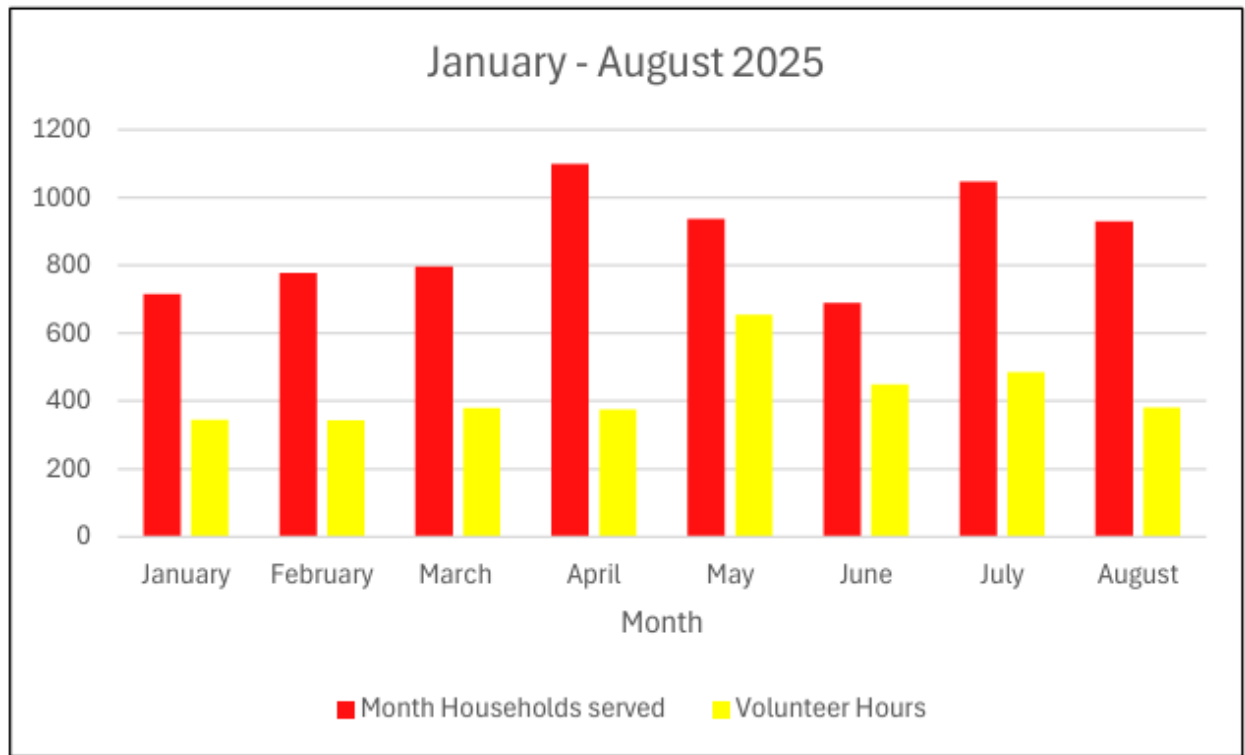
Eileen Griswold, Food Pantry Volunteer, shares what she hears from clients when they visit the Food Pantry. Clients say "we are angels" and often express how much the food boxes help with their monthly expenses. One client called Eileen "Ms. Dependable" and shared appreciation for always wearing a smile. We often receive love offerings from clients (\$1,\$5, \$10) for providing a place to receive a "hand up". Eileen admits these kind words keep me volunteering.

Great to welcome **Ruth Vasquez**, Network Engagement with [Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina](#) for our annual visit making sure our systems strongly support the flow of nutrition to our clients.



Pictured here: Marcy Hoffman, Admin Coordinator, Jimmy Bender, Food Pantry Director, Geraldine Eubanks, volunteer coordinator with Ruth Vasquez.

Food Pantry



Camp Feedback



Filling Young Hearts with the Arts

DANCE, ART & MUSIC DAY CAMP
FOR JONES COUNTY RESIDENTS

"Our girls absolutely loved camp! As always! Wren's favorite part was the crafts. Ellie's was cooking and art! She made the pasta and bean salad today! "



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

- Board Members -

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



If you would like to be part of making difference,
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.