FILLING STATION

Psalm 107:5

Nutrition · Education · Connection

General Newsletter

"Food for Thought"

November 2026

Message from the Executive Director's Desk



Our THEME for 2026:

Adventure, Curious, Present

Stay curious about the present and you will find yourself on an ADVENTURE!

There is no greater investment than sowing belief, time, love into people. Our mission is to assist in filling unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education, and Connection serving the residents of Jones County, NC while staying focused on a larger vision of being a premier connector of people and resources for Jones County and the world. Everything we do in our programming, projects and events aligns with this vision and mission. Connection in community leads to creative solutions to empower, equip and encourage one another in leaving a lasting legacy.

Our adventures continued as we kicked off Leadership Jones/ Cohort 7 on September 14th focusing on Legacy and the Roots of Jones County. Over a 7 week period, this group dug into the county profile learning how we can continue to assist in filling unmet needs. The project was to build a tourism website for Jones County highlighting all the reasons to visit. Thank you to the Town of Maysville for hosting Leadership Jones Graduation in the newly renovated Town Depot. We appreciate Tharesa Lee, Intentional Excellence Consulting, for leading this program over the last 3 years.

In October, another Ham Radio Technician Course kicked off. Thank you to Pete Wene, New Bern Amateur Radio Club for providing the education on this important communication tool.

The Food Pantry continues to serve over 250 households each week. Over the last 2 months, we have experienced an increase with over 30 new households requesting assistance. We simply could not do this great work without the teams from all the church partners each month. The gifts and talents continue to multiply as we connect in service loving our neighbors as ourselves.

Three years ago, we hosted the Blue Cross Blue Shield Extra Mile Tour: https://www.bluecrossnc.com/extra-miles-tour/jones-county. This was an opportunity to talk with our community partners about the pressing issues here in Jones County. In an effort to address some of these issues, we launched a new program in July, "Bridging Food and Meds", a monthly program focusing on 6 different areas in Nutrition Education. In September, we hosted a session on building a strong immune system and in October, was focused on Heart Health.
More information: https://fillingstation1075.com/bridging-food-and-meds/

Nutrition Education continues as Sarah Ware, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, provided several classes throughout the county. 54 children learned hands-on opportunities to explore and taste seasonal produce through the Locally Delicious Program. In addition, One Pot Dinner class was taught in our Teaching Kitchen sharing practical strategies for preparing simple meals while reducing preparation time. The Filling Station is grateful for the opportunity to provide Nutrition Education throughout Jones County through a Cost Share Agreement.

We are heading into the season of Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Each week we make it a priority to "roll out the RED carpet" for our clients making them feel important as we assist in filling unmet needs. On November 7th, we hosted our 6th Annual Event - "Jones County - A Perfect 10" welcoming over 200 people on campus to enjoy lunch in the garden, music and drop-in painting. Thank you to all the sponsors, partners and volunteers who made this an extraordinary event. I am excited to share that we exceeded our goal of $70,000 to make it possible to continue the excellent programming for 2027.

Join us for "Christmas on Main" here in Pollocksville to kick off the holiday season on Sat, Dec. 5th at 5:30 PM - Golfcart Parade, Santa, Coffee and Cocoa in the Front Gathering Space of The Filling Station for children to write letters to Santa and photos. Food Trucks, Vendors, and lighting of the tree. We are excited to support Pollocksville Rotary Club as they host this event for the community.

Much gratitude and may you and your family have a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas season!
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

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Jones Co – A Perfect 10 Event

Jones County - A Perfect 10 2026 is a wrap!

What a perfect fall day to connect, raise awareness and funds for the mission.





Yes, we met our goal thanks to an amazing committee chaired by Greg Thornburg Solid Rock Global Methodist Church.



Thank you Pollocksville Elementary for coming and cheering with RED POM POMs welcoming all the guests.









Thank you Kinston First Pentecostal Holiness Church for dressing up in your USA 🇺🇸 suit.





Thank you Jones County 4-H club for cooking treats to serve those in attendance.

Thank you N.C. State Extension: Jones County Family & Consumer Sciences for your continued partnership.

Thank you Jones County Veterans Services sharing USA 🇺🇸 flags with us to celebrate our Veterans.

Thank you Pollocksville Methodist Church and Coastal Carolina Church for bringing a set and take down team.

Jones Co – A Perfect 10 Event

Supporters, Partners and Future Plans



Thank you New Bern Amateur Radio Club for bringing your communications trailer highlighting the need for connection and for your partnership since 2017.





Thank you, Bobby and Betsy Darden, Garber Church, Greg Thornberg, Solid Rock Global Methodist Church, and Sheron Bender, Pollocksville Presbyterian Church and Carol Mattocks, Board Advisor for all your love and support for the mission.



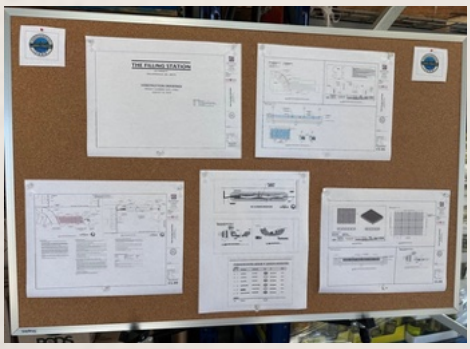
Thank you Charley Jones for your video sharing the history of Jones County NC for all those who came to the event.



Thank you Ed Jekel, Facilities Manager, for overseeing the projects to be ready for this annual event.



Always a great day when Town of Pollocksville Mayor, Jay Bender visits The Filling Station.



Plans underway:

Innovative Storm Water Project enhancing the campus with plantings and drainage infrastructure.



Jones Co – A Perfect 10 Event

delicious!

FOOD











No event is complete with food. Thank you Greg Thornburg Solid Rock Global Methodist Church and Johnny Jernigan Blue Cross NC for taking the lead on the yummy lunch in the Garden Venue.

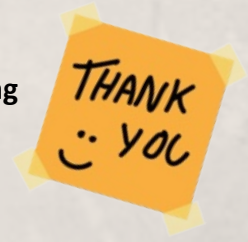




The Bake Sale was a hit. Thank you Brenda Parker and team for organizing and making sure all the goodies went to good homes.
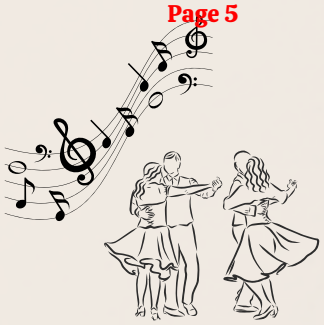


Thank you Pollocksville Methodist Church for partnering with The Filling Station





Jones Co – A Perfect 10 Event



Drop in Painting, Music, & Dancing







Thank you

Kit Jordan

&

Noreen Jekel

for leading the painting.



Thank you Simon Spalding, for sharing your musical talent.





Thank you to the Green Grass Cloggers - GGC. You all are always a hit!



Jones Co – A Perfect 10 Event

SHOW TIME

New to Jones County - A Perfect 10 this year!

Mini RED CAR SHOW!







Thank you Jack Bender, Darrell Bell, Steven Brown and Zach Simons for bringing your cars this year.













In memory of John Baldwin, one of our supporters over the years, First Capital AACA Chapter - New Bern brought his car to be among the line up.

Leadership Jones

LEADERSHIP JONES
...A GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Leadership Jones brings together participants from various backgrounds, including Jones County residents, local government representatives, nonprofit leaders and faith-based leaders. Participants contribute their time, experience and ideas while working toward a shared vision for the Greater Jones County community.



The academy is led by Tharesa Chadwick Lee, grassroots leadership facilitator and founder of Intentional Excellence Consulting. Leadership Jones is hosted by The Filling Station and supported by community partners, including the Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Award and State Employees' Credit Union.

"Relationships lead to resources. There is nothing more important than making connections throughout your community," said Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director of The Filling Station, during the first day of Leadership Jones.







Leadership Jones Cohort 7 attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Public Works Facility in Trenton on Oct 19. Thank you Tharesa Lee, Facilitator for Leadership Jones, for prioritizing learning about how local government works.



"I was glad to join local leaders and members of the community in Trenton for the groundbreaking of the new Jones County Public Works Facility. Public works may not always make the headlines, but the people who maintain our roads, care for our infrastructure, and keep our communities running play an important role in our daily lives. This new facility invests in those hardworking employees and in Jones County's future.

Jones County is home to people who take pride in their communities and work hard to make them better. I believe strong partnerships between local, state, and federal leaders are essential to helping our communities grow and ensuring they have the resources they need.

It was great to be part of this milestone, and I want to thank the county leaders, staff, and everyone who helped bring this project to this point. I look forward to seeing the progress ahead and the positive impact this facility will have on Jones County for years to come."

Congressman Greg Murphy, MD

Leadership Jones







Leadership Jones is part of The Filling Station's broader mission to address unmet needs in nutrition, education and connection throughout Jones County. The program focuses on community voices, as well as generational, social and civic leadership.

Leadership Jones - Cohort 7 Graduation















Thank you Town of Maysville for making it possible for the event to take place at the newly renovated Town Depot building.



Jones Co Heritage Festival





The Filling Station at the Jones County Heritage Festival 2026. Big thank you to New Bern Web Design, LLC for the photos! It was a perfect day in Jones County NC.





















What's Happening



"Bridging Food and Meds" Series

Topic: Heart Health

Thank you Marcy Hoffman for creating and delivering this powerful program to our community.









Next class is

Nov. 17!

For more information

& to register, click

HERE



Thank you, CarolinaEast Foundation for the funding to bring this to Town of Pollocksville & Jones County NC

Listen to our Podcasts about Bridging Food & Meds by clicking below

Episode #28: Bridging Food and Medicine: A New Health Initiative

Episode #30: When health comes first, everything else follows

Episode #34: Your Gut Is Talking. Are You Listening?

Episode #37: Finding Balance From the Inside Out

Episode #38: Finding Balance Part 2

Episode #43: Building Your Immune System

Episode #45: Joint Health

Episode #47: Heart Health



What's Happening

The Filling Station Antenna Upgrade Expands Emergency Radio Coverage in Jones County



POLLOCKSVILLE, N.C. – Oct. 8, 2026 – Residents, amateur radio operators, and emergency responders in Jones County and surrounding areas now have expanded radio coverage after The Filling Station installed new antennas on its Pollocksville tower on Sept. 30. The installation completes a repeater upgrade funded by a $10,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation.

The new antenna system serves two repeaters: a 2-meter VHF amateur radio repeater and a General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) repeater.

A repeater sits high on a tower and rebroadcasts signals from handheld and vehicle radios, which greatly extends how far those radios can reach. The repeaters give The Filling Station, the New Bern Amateur Radio Club, Jones County Emergency Services, and local residents another way to communicate, especially when cell service, internet, or power fail during a disaster. ***Click to continue reading.**







What's Happening



AMATEUR RADIO LICENSE CLASS

The Filling Station in partership 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 3rd
Session 1. Chapter 1: Welcome to Amateur Radio
Chapter 2: Radio and Signals Fundamentals

October 10th
Session 2. Chapter 3: Electricity, Components and Circuits

October 17th
Session 3. Chapter 4: Propagation, Antennas, and Feed Lines

October 24th
Session 4. Chapter 5: Amateur Radio Equipment

All classes are from 10AM - Noon

October 31st
Session 5. Chapter 6: Communicating with Other Hams

Friday, November 6th **Time: 6pm to 8pm**
Session 6. Chapter 7: Licensing Regulations
Chapter 8: Operating Regulations

November 14th
Session 7 Chapter 9: Safety

November 14th
Test Session (following class)
VE Test - ~11 am (directly after class)
FCC Sanctioned Testing
$15 for the test – Dictated by the ARRL
$35 to the FCC for license processing once you pass the test

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

What's Happening







Podcast #56 –

Kindness at Pollocksville Elementary with Kelly Kirschner





In this episode of The Filling Station podcast, host Mary Ann LeRay sits down with Kelly Coward Kirschner, principal of Pollocksville Elementary School. Kelly is Jones County through and through: she attended Trenton Elementary and Jones Senior High School, studied at East Carolina University, and began her teaching career in Craven County. Thirty years later, she is back home leading a school where she knows her students' parents and grandparents, and she says she still enjoys going to work every day.

Food Pantry

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

-Helen Keller

As we enter into the season of Thanksgiving, we are incredibly thankful for our volunteers and partners. We are blessed to have familiar faces that show up week after week as well as those that have chosen specific volunteer days.





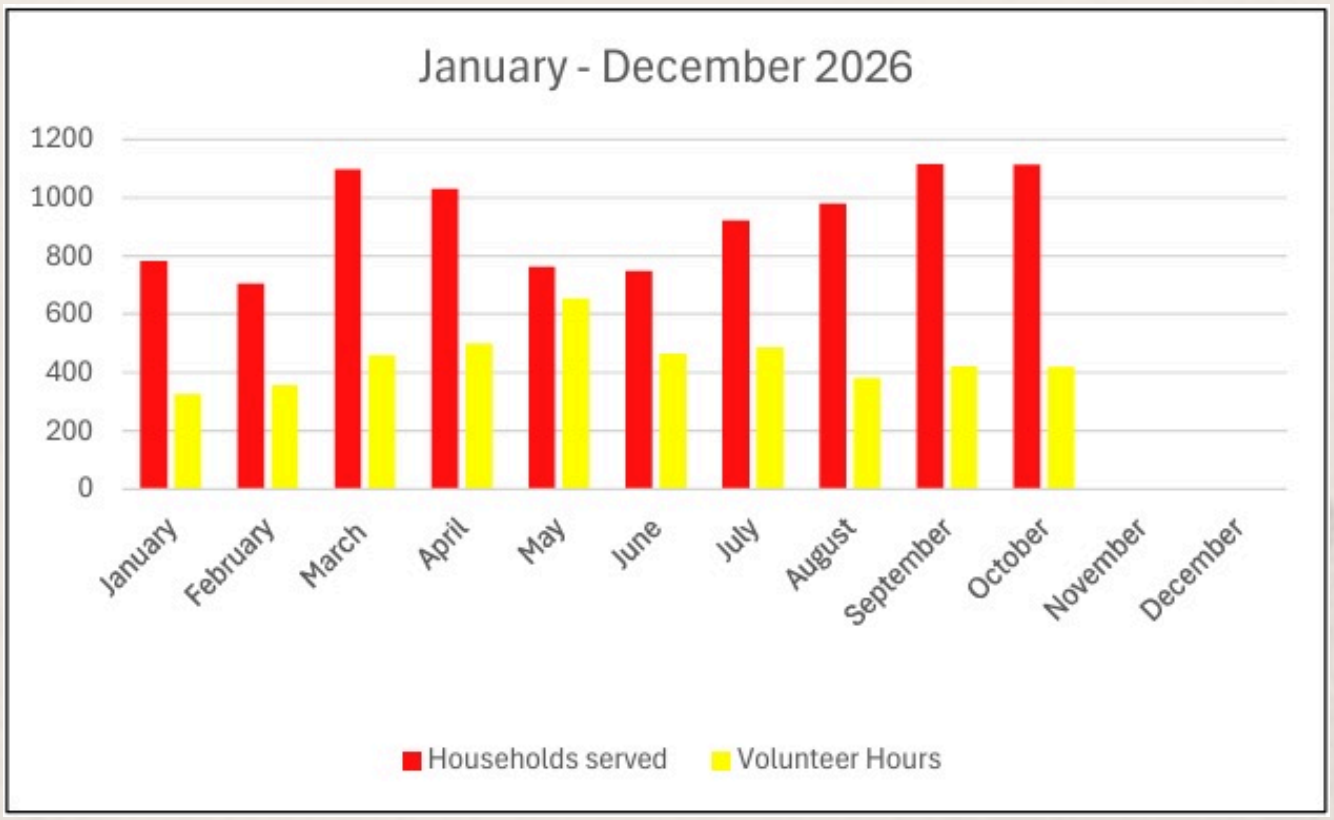
Thank you Jerry & Sheri Smith from Triune Holiness Church for your board leadership and partnership. You make a difference!





Thank you, Lauren Wargo, from Duke Energy for your support and many volunteer hours in filling the mission. Working together is the fuel that keeps us filled up.





Teaching Kitchen





"Cooking with Sarah"





Thank you **N.C. State Extension: Jones County Family & Consumer Sciences** for planning such yummy food & classes in the Teaching Kitchen.



Upcoming Cooking Classes:

Follow the Jones FCS Family FB page for dates and registration for classes

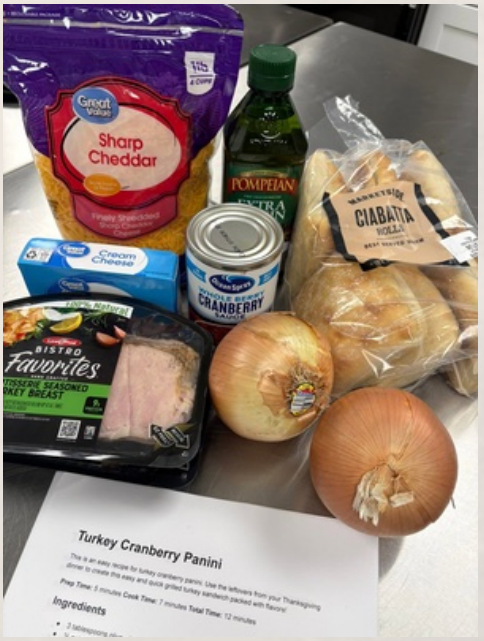














Sarah Ware, M.S.
Extension Agent
Family & Consumer Sciences
NC State University
NC Cooperative Extension
PhD Student
Sarah_Ware@ncsu.edu

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
N.C. A&T
NC STATE UNIVERSITY
FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES PROGRAM

Volunteers

Thank You!

Way to go Jones Senior High School Trojans for sowing seed into your community. You make a difference! We appreciate the student volunteers who helped with several projects on campus on a teacher workday.







Thank you to all the volunteers who make this mission possible.











Leave a Legacy Campaign





https://www.bricksrus.com/donorsite/fillingstation1075

"Leave a Legacy" by purchasing a brick along the sidewalk leading to the front doors of The Filling Station
This sidewalk represents the many footsteps of volunteers, donors, clients, partners, pastors and elected officials.
During this special campaign, you have the opportunity to honor those who have made this mission possible.
4x8 Brick is $100 & 8x8 Brick is $225.00
https://www.bricksrus.com/donorsite/fillingstation1075
For more information: please call 252-224-1127 or email: fsdirector@fillingstation1075.com



Would you like to be part of Leaving a Legacy?

Click here for more information



BRICKS R US
ENGRAVED BRICKS & TILES

FUNDRAISING THAT BUILDS A LASTING LEGACY

Every gift tells a story. For over 35+ years, Bricks R Us/Vortex Legacy Group/Fundraisers Sports has partnered with organizations across the country to create fundraising programs that celebrate donors, strengthen communities, and leave a lasting impact. Our engraved brick campaigns, donor recognition projects, and turnkey fundraising solutions help transform supporter contributions into permanent tributes that inspire pride and connection for generations. Trusted by universities, nonprofits, municipalities, and professional sports organizations nationwide, we help our clients raise funds while creating legacies that endure long after the campaign ends.

Save the Date

Getting Through The Holidays

GRIEF SUPPORT WORKSHOP

at The Filling Station in Pollocksville, NC

The upcoming holidays can be a difficult time for those who are experiencing loss in their lives. Cardinal Hospice Care is offering a workshop to provide education, information, and support for those who are dealing with grief and loss.

The workshop is free & open to adults of all ages. Some topics discussed will include:

Dealing with Difficult Emotions During the Holidays
Survival Tips for Handling the Holidays
Making Decisions About Holiday Traditions and Rituals

Tuesday, December 1, 2026 – 10AM
Tuesday, December 8, 2026 – 10AM
Tuesday, December 15, 2026 – 10AM

Join us at The Filling Station, 221 Main Street, Pollocksville
Facilitated by Dr. Deneen Glasco, D.R.E., D.Div., D.C.Cl.,
Clinical Hospice Chaplain and Bereavement Coordinator

TO REGISTER, PLEASE CALL 252-224-1127

25 CARDINAL HOSPICE CARE

FILLING STATION

Save the Date

CHRISTMAS
at Town Hall
ON MAIN STREET

GRAND MARSHALL
VICKIE BELL

LIGHTING OF CHRISTMAS TREE | PARADE - GOLF CARTS & ANTIQUE CARS
FOOD VENDORS | HANDMADE CRAFT VENDORS
CAKE WALK STOCKING | RAFFLE WITH DRAWING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2026
5:30 - 7:30 PM

SPONSORED BY
POLLOCKSVILLE ROTARY CLUB

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:
(252) 671-7725 OR (252) 229-6545

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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Vice-Chair: Sheron Bender
Treasurer: Estelle Surles
Secretary: Emily Andrews
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Kenneth Spivey
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Mary Ann LeRay, Executive Director
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Ed Jekel, Facilities Manager
Jimmy Bender, Food Pantry Director
Geraldine Eubanks, Volunteer Coordinator

Carol Mattocks, Board Advisor
Tharesa Lee, Consultant
Holly Ladner, Editor

PO Box 222 221 Main Street
Pollocksville, NC 28573
252-224-1127
Email: info@fillingstation1075.com
Website: https://fillingstation1075.com
Facebook: Facebook.com/FS1075

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



"From No Running Water to Knowing Where to Turn for Help"

A couple who had recently moved to Pollocksville came to The Filling Station needing water for their home. They had discovered that the pipes in the house needed to be replaced and were unsure where to turn for help.
The Filling Station provided water for their immediate needs and then connected them with the people and resources that could help solve the larger problem. This included the local water department, a plumber who could replace the pipes at a reasonable cost, and the county office where they could apply for an Urgent Repair Grant. Instead of leaving with only water, the couple left with a path forward. Within a short period of time, they had been connected with the people who could help restore water to their home and potentially provide financial assistance with the repairs. "When we heard the church bells ringing, we knew we weren't far from someone who would help us."
***New residents in Pollocksville**

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.

If you would like to be part of making difference, we invite you to click **here** or scan the QR Code.