

Weekly News Summary for August 30, 2026.

On the Dare County Board of Commissioners agenda for Tuesday, September 1 is consideration of a joint resolution asking state officials to permanently exempt locally registered vehicles from ferry tolls and fees. Eight other counties are involved in the request to waive ferry tolls and fees on locally registered personal and commercial vehicles.

A provision in the state's 2026 budget requires NCDOT to begin collecting tolls on every state ferry route by Jan. 1, 2027. Only four routes do not have ferry tolls: Hatteras-Ocracoke, Currituck-Knotts Island, Bayview-Aurora and Cherry Branch-Minnesott Beach. The law also requires a \$150 annual commuter pass for permanent residents of North Carolina's 20 coastal counties and active-duty military personnel.

Under the budget law, revenue generated by the expanded tolling program must be used for ferry vessel replacement rather than daily operations, staffing, fuel or maintenance. NCDOT has not yet finalized individual toll rates or payment and collection procedures.

NCDOT has set up listening sessions about the tolling mandate. Two sessions will be held locally from 6 to 8 p.m. on September 8 at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras Village and on September 9 at the Ocracoke School.

Comments may be submitted through the NCDOT Ferry tolling website until midnight Sept. 14. NCDOT expects to present recommended tolls and a rate-setting method to the state's Board of Transportation on Oct. 8, with the board scheduled to consider adopting the rates Nov. 5

The agency has also established a timeline for moving from public input to implementation.

- After the comment period closes Sept. 14, NCDOT plans to release a summary of public comments by Sept. 22.
- Recommended toll rates and the methodology used to establish them are scheduled to be presented to the N.C. Board of Transportation on Oct. 8.
- The Board of Transportation is scheduled to consider adopting the toll rates and rate-setting methodology on Nov. 5, leaving less than two months before the legislatively mandated start date.
- The new tolls are scheduled to take effect Jan. 1, 2027.

The NC Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Marine Fisheries is reminding people to please report any sightings of blue land crabs.

Blue Land Crabs are a non-native species to the Carolinas that look like enormous fiddler crabs. An uptick in sightings has occurred in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia in recent years.

They are native to the southern Atlantic coasts from Brazil to South Florida, but sightings were first reported in South Carolina in 2008. The first confirmed blue land crab sighting in North Carolina occurred in summer 2023. Since then, there have been 23 confirmed sightings in North Carolina and another 34 unconfirmed reports. Two of the 23 confirmed cases were this year, both in Emerald Isle.

Despite their name, the crabs vary widely in color. Adult males tend to have the characteristic blue-gray coloring, but females can also be white or ash-gray. Juveniles can range from orangish to dark brown to purple. They're unusually long-lived and slow-growing among crab species, reaching maturity at four years of age and surviving up to 11 years. For more information and images please visit the Blue Land Crab Species Profile page.

For more information, contact [Scott Scriptor](#) at scott dot scripter at deq dot nc dot gov.

The online Judicial Voter Guide: 2026 General Election is now available on the State Board of Elections' website. Ready to take down the address: ncsbe.gov/voting/upcoming-election/judicial-voter-guide-2026-general-election
The digital guide contains info about this year's candidates for North Carolina's appellate courts – the North Carolina Supreme Court and North Carolina Court of Appeals.

In the coming weeks, the State Board will send a postcard with a QR code link to the online Judicial Voter Guide to all North Carolina households. The State Board is not sending a full, printed version of the guide in 2026 because the fund created for the guide has been depleted.

Supreme Court justices and Court of Appeals judges serve eight-year terms.

Flounder carcass collection underway

The NC Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Marine Fisheries is collecting flounder carcasses from recreational fishermen during the 2026 season. The collection is held from September 1 through September 14 and applies to joint and coastal waters. The carcasses will be used for research purposes.

The collection point for Hatteras Island is Frisco Rod & Gun, 53610 NC 12, Frisco

When cleaning the fish, anglers should leave the head and tail intact and, if possible, leave the guts and reproductive organs in the fish. Anglers who fished on a charter boat or head boat should inform the fish cleaner that the carcass will be donated.

The 2026 recreational flounder season officially opens at 12:01 a.m. Sept. 1 and closes at 11:59 p.m. Sept. 14.

Anglers may keep one fish per person per day. The minimum size limit is 15 inches total length.

Division biologists will obtain data from commercially caught flounder at fish houses. Commercially caught carcasses should not be left in the Carcass Collection Program freezers.

Labor Day closures; trash pick-up schedule

All Dare County offices and facilities will be closed on Monday, September 7, 2026, in observance of the Labor Day holiday. Offices and facilities will reopen and resume operating with their regularly scheduled hours on Tuesday, September 8, 2026.

The closures include the Dare County C&D Landfill, Manns Harbor Transfer Station, Buxton Transfer Station and Manteo Recycle Yard.

There will be **no changes** to Dare County Public Works' trash collection schedule on Labor Day, Monday, September 7.

All Hatteras Island whose services are provided by the Dare County Public Works Department will operate on their normal schedule during the week of Monday, September 7 through Friday, September 11, 2026.

Saturday Residential & Commercial Trash Collection

The Saturday **commercial** trash collection for Rodanthe, Waves, Salvo, Avon, Buxton, Frisco and Hatteras will continue through Labor Day weekend and then conclude on Saturday, September 12.

Coming up this week or out aways

The **Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative** is hosting a Community Safety Night at the cooperative's Operations Center on Light Plant Road in Buxton on Tuesday, September 1. At 5:30, a brief safety clinic will be held, followed by refreshments, giveaways and bucket truck rides. All cooperative members and families are welcome.

Clarks Bethel Methodist Church is sponsoring a community fish fry fundraiser, Friday September 4 at the Rodanthe-Waves- Salvo Community Building. The Fundraiser runs from 6 to 8 o'clock with proceeds supporting Kids Shop Free, the Church's Christmas ministry.

About Gee Gee Rosell

Celebrating the life and legacy of longtime Buxton bookseller Marjean "Gee Gee" Rosell will be held Thursday, September 10

The first event is at 9 o'clock at the Cape Hatteras Secondary School. Beach Glass Books will present a donation to a scholarship honoring Gee Gee. Funds are from proceeds from The Gee Gee Book.

From 10 to noon, Buxton Village Books will host a meet-the-authors event featuring writers who helped create the commemorative book. Attendees may purchase a copy at the event or bring previously purchased books to be signed. "The Gee Gee Book: The Life and Legacy of Outer Banks Icon Gee Gee Rosell" was assembled by author and publisher Ray McAllister with contributions from Rosell's relatives, friends, authors, photographers, and community members, reports Island Free Press.

The scholarship was created by the Buxton Civic Association in partnership with Rosell's family and close friends. Administered by the Outer Banks Community Foundation, it supports graduates of Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies as they pursue their educational goals.

At the Hatteras Library

Storytimes with Ms. Tammy

Programs are designed with specific age groups in mind, but children of all ages with their caregivers are always welcome!

The program in the Hatteras Library starts Thursday morning, September 17.

For ages 2 to 3, 10:15 to 10:50 |

For ages 3 to 5, 11 to 11:45

Low-Key Teen Takeover at Hatteras Library

Teens take over the Hatteras Library on Friday evening, September 18 from 5 to 7. The library address is 57689 NC 12, Hatteras Village

Hatteras Island Meals raffle underway

Hatteras Island Meals has launched its annual island-wide raffle, a key fundraiser supporting weekday meal deliveries to elderly, homebound, and recovering residents from Rodanthe to Hatteras Village, reports Island Free Press.

The raffle drawing will be held Saturday, Oct. 3. Tickets are \$10 each or four for \$35 and may be purchased online at Hatteras island meals dot org slash raffle tickets 2026.

Tickets will also be sold from 10 to 2, Wednesdays and Thursdays at Ace Hardware. After Labor Day, volunteers will sell tickets from 10 to 2 Fridays at Conner's Supermarket.

Cash, checks, and credit cards will be accepted for in-person purchases.

The raffle features prizes donated by Hatteras Island businesses and community supporters. A list of participating donors and additional raffle information is available on the organization's website, reports Island Free Press.

Hatteras Island Meals, commonly known as HIM, is an all-volunteer nonprofit that provides meals and regular personal contact for island residents who cannot prepare nutritious food for themselves, do not have someone available to assist them, or need short- or long-term help because of an illness or medical condition.

The organization traces its beginnings to 1987, when island residents began preparing meals for neighbors in need. Today, approximately 60 volunteers help deliver meals each weekday to about 40 recipients across Hatteras Island. HIM delivers nearly 11,000 meals annually, according to the organization. The nonprofit estimates that providing meals to one recipient for a week costs approximately \$35.

In addition to its meal-delivery program, HIM operates the Cape Hatteras Food Pantry. Residents seeking assistance may make an appointment through the Dare County Department of Health and Human Services at 252-475-9320 or email hatteras island meals at gmail dot com.

Be careful out there. This is Radio Hatteras.