

# COUNTY FOCUS

South Carolina Association of Counties

Volume 28

Number 2



**Cherokee County  
Eat Smart Move More Coalition  
Receives National Recognition**



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SOUTH CAROLINA  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

**COVER PHOTOS** Top Photo: CHEROKEE COUNTY COUNCIL—Committed to creating a healthy community, one of the key components of Cherokee County's Eat Smart Move More Coalition, are: (l to r) Cherokee County Council Members Charles T. Mathis, Jr., Ronnie David Smith and Michael (Mike) Alan Fowlkes; Council Chairman Timothy (Tim) Floyd Spencer; Council Member Tracy A. McDaniel; Council Vice Chairman John Quay Little; and County Administrator Holland Belue. Bottom Photo: CHEROKEE COUNTY EAT SMART MOVE MORE COALITION MEMBERS. (Members are identified beneath the photo on P. 10. See story, Pp. 2–11.)



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W. Stuart Morgan III, Editor

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# Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition Receives National Recognition

By W. Stuart Morgan III

The Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition received national recognition last year for successfully creating healthy lifestyles for children countywide.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)—the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated solely to health—recognized the county's Eat Smart Move More (ESMM) Coalition on the Foundation's website on June 23, 2016. The website's Signs for Progress section reported a 21 percent relative decline in the combined overweight and obesity rate for third graders and a 20.2 percent relative decline for first graders from 2012 to 2015. (See P. 4)



"Our county's Eat Smart Move More Coalition is a grassroots effort that strives to teach our young people the importance of eating properly and exercising to live healthier lifestyles now as well as into adulthood," said Holland Belue, Cherokee County Administrator. "These young people are the key to our county's future—our leaders, educators and heads of households. They'll begin filling



The RWJF's Signs of Progress section profiles efforts by counties, municipalities and states that are helping children lead healthier lives. When profiling the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition, Signs of Progress credited the county's coalition for taking an "all-hands-on-deck approach" to creating

positions as members of our county's current workforce in the decades ahead. So, making healthy lifestyle decisions now could positively impact their lives and our county in the future."

healthy environments for children and improving the health and wellness of children.

Signs of Progress highlighted some of Cherokee County's successes:

- Super Saturday community field day events led by Gaffney High School students;
- Cooking Matters classes that teach local families how to shop for healthy, affordable food;
- School Garden Initiatives; and
- YMCA adoption of healthy eating/active living standards for afterschool programs.

The RWJF's Signs of Progress section also mentioned that Cherokee County is developing a Pedestrian Master Plan, and facilitating discussions about Open Community use policies with schools to improve children's health and wellness.

Signs of Progress concluded that collaboration among many leaders in

Cherokee County is helping to create an environment where healthy choices are accessible, affordable and becoming the



*"Our county's Eat Smart Move More Coalition is a grassroots effort that strives to teach our young people the importance of eating properly and exercising to live healthier lifestyles now as well as into adulthood."*

— Holland Belue  
Cherokee County Administrator

norm for many families and children.

Cherokee County Council Chairman Timothy F. Spencer said, "Cherokee County is committed to working within the community to provide opportunities for residents young and old to be physically active, and the county's Eat Smart Move More initiative is one of the key components to creating a healthy community."

**Robert Wood Johnson  
Foundation**

*"Cherokee County is committed to working within the community to provide opportunities for residents young and old to be physically active, and the county's Eat Smart Move More initiative is one of the key components to creating a healthy community."*

— Timothy F. Spencer  
Cherokee County Council Chairman

beginning to slow after decades of increasing. Still, the study emphasized that the childhood national obesity rates were still alarmingly higher than they were 25 years ago.

RWJF's strategy is to help children grow up at a healthy weight, according to Jasmine N. Hall Ratiff, Program Officer, RWJF. The Foundation encourages communities to unite across sectors and create opportunities for children and families, to be more active and to eat healthy food. The Foundation also encourages

RWJF's study, "The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America," released in September 2016, reported that the national childhood obesity rate in the United States was

leaders of counties, schools, health departments, businesses and health care organizations to work together on issues, including  
(Continued on next page)



Partnering to lower the combined overweight and obesity rates for children across Cherokee County are: (l to r) Robin Reed, Executive Director, KNOW(2); and Christina Cody and Page Rogers, Co-Chairmen of the Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition. (Photo by Stuart Morgan)

access to affordable and healthy food, and to find ways for citizens to become active.

“Many places are taking on this challenge. So, we wanted to recognize and share the stories of states, counties, cities and even school districts that have successfully used partnerships and seen their obesity rates drop,” Ratiff explained. “Cherokee County is one of the communities that’s demonstrating how the power of partnerships can lead to reduction in childhood obesity and ultimately healthier communities. Everyone in this county should be proud of the work they’re doing, and of the fact that

childhood obesity rates in the county have declined in recent years.”

*“Cherokee County is one of the communities that’s demonstrating how the power of partnerships can lead to reduction in childhood obesity and ultimately healthier communities.”*

— Jasmine N. Hall Ratiff  
Program Manager  
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

### Eat Smart Move More South Carolina

Eat Smart Move More South Carolina (ESMMSC) coordinates obesity prevention efforts, including those led by the Cherokee County ESMM Chapter (Coalition) and 24 other chapters representing 30 counties across the state. ESMMSC also supports community-led change and connects its partners—ESMM chapters—so  
(See CCESMM, P. 6)



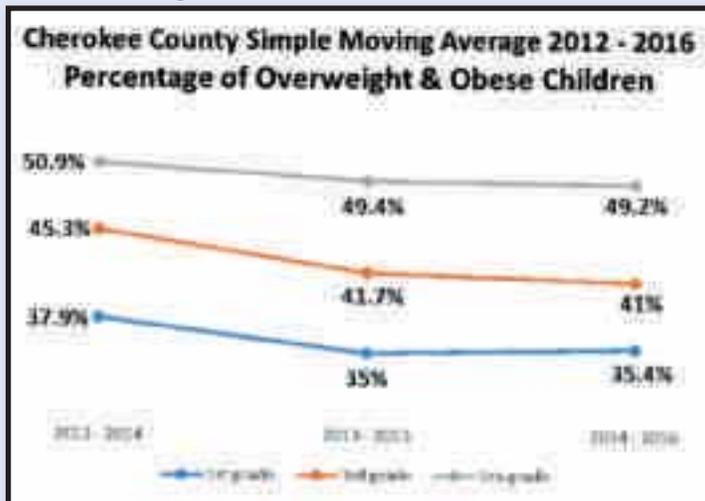
# Key Findings of Cherokee County Body Mass Index Reports

The Cherokee County School District Body Mass Index (BMI) Project publishes reports that provide a wealth of information and data, including numerous charts and graphs illustrating health related trends.

The graph (below) is one of the illustrations created from data collected for Cherokee County’s 2016 BMI Report, the BMI Project’s fifth. Although this particular graph was not published in the printed report, it is shown online in a Prezi presentation at:

<https://prezi.com/m0ezmspxbjef/cherokee-county-2015-2016-bmi-report/>

The graph illustrates a simple moving average to show the percentage of overweight and obese children from 2012 to 2016. The graph smooths out the data and provides a better, more consistent long-term forecast. Note the decline in percentage of overweight and obese first- and third-graders.



**NOTE:** Data collected in the Cherokee County School District BMI Project and published in its reports is strictly for surveillance and not used for screening. Surveillance data is collected to help school officials and policymakers make informed decisions on how to address childhood obesity.

The BMI Report explains the causes of childhood obesity, recommends ways to combat childhood obesity and reports key findings for the following schools:

- Alma Elementary
- B.D. Lee Elementary
- Blacksburg Elementary
- Blacksburg Primary
- Corinth Elementary
- Draytonville Elementary
- Goucher Elementary
- Grassy Pond Elementary
- Limestone-Central Elementary
- Luther L. Vaughn Elementary
- Mary Bramlett Elementary
- Northwest Elementary



## Cherokee County Four Year Trend Data: Percentage of Overweight & Obese Children



On June 23, 2016, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation used this bar chart in the Signs for Progress section of the Foundation’s website when highlighting the success of the Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition. The chart illustrates the 21 percent relative decline in the combined overweight and obesity rate for third graders and a 20.2 percent relative decline for first graders from 2012 to 2015.



*Creating and playing fun games, playing with a hula hoop and participating in sports like soccer are among the many ways that students in the Cherokee County School District are exercising. Exercise plays a major role in reducing the combined overweight and obesity rate for children.*

*The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sent photographers to Cherokee County to photograph the many activities that the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition promotes and supports. The photos were published in Signs of Progress on the Foundation's website.*

*The top two photos were taken by Scott Powell for The Gaffney Ledger.*





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## CCESMM ...

(Continued from P. 4)

their members can share their successes and the lessons they've learned.

Beth Franco, Executive Director of ESMMSC, said the recognition that Cherokee County's ESMM Coalition received from the RWJF was well-deserved. She also emphasized why the coalition's work is so important now more than ever.

Franco referenced an article, "The Health Effects of Overweight and Obesity in 195 Counties over 25 Years," published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in June, which reported that 2 billion people worldwide suffer health problems related to being overweight and obese. The piece noted that, compared to 20 of the most populated countries in the world, the United States has the highest rate of obesity among children and young adults.

For the South as a region and South Carolina as a state, the news just gets worse. RWJF's study, "The State of Obesity: Better Policies for a Healthier America," released last year and referenced earlier in this article, reported that:

- Of 11 states in the United States with the highest obesity rates, nine are in the South.
- South Carolina, with an adult obesity rate of 31.7 percent, ranks 13th highest for adult obesity in the nation. The state also ranks 8th for Diabetes, reflecting the correlation of obesity to diabetes.

Because Cherokee County ranks 29th among South Carolina's 46 counties for the health of its residents, the county's residents have reasons to be concerned.

After all, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that eliminating three risk factors—poor diet, inactivity and smoking—would prevent 80 percent of heart disease and strokes, 80 percent of Type 2 Diabetes, and 40 percent of cancer. These figures highlight *why* Cherokee County's achievement lowering the county's childhood obesity rate last

year was such a significant achievement, and *why* the RWJF recognized Cherokee County's success.

"The fact that Cherokee County was able to reduce the obesity and overweight rates among children should be celebrated!" Franco emphasized. "It's important to recognize the county's effort to reduce those rates as an example of how a successful collaboration of individuals and organizations from various sectors can create positive and lasting change. Cherokee County's Eat Smart Move More Coalition is special because it's a coalition that represents the county's commitment to create healthier environments for young people. It's a coalition that includes county government, local communities, schools, churches and organizations providing healthcare services.

"The real work is being done locally, driven by champions at the local level," she added. "Cherokee County's Coaliton is one of many groups trying to create change."

### Cherokee County ESMM Coalition

#### Background

The Cherokee County ESMM Coalition, founded in 2015, traces its development to a successful partnership that formed in 2009.

The United Way of the Piedmont, Cherokee County Community Foundation and Upstate Workforce Investment Board partnered that year to improve and effect positive change within Cherokee County's communities. This partnership became the foundation for the Cherokee County Community Indicators (CI) Project, which focused on the county's five most pressing issues:

- 1) Education
- 2) Public Health

- 3) Family and Youth
- 4) Crime and Safety, and
- 5) Economic Development.

Dr. Garrison Walters of the S.C. Higher Education Foundation was preparing to launch a new program about the same time called, "KNOW(2)," whose mission would be to bring about a mind-set change in education at the community level. Dr. Walters selected Cherokee County to be the pilot for the KNOW(2) program for the state and eventually the nation.



While initially focused on education, KNOW(2), based in Gaffney, has broadened its efforts and now oversees work groups affiliated with each of the five prioritized areas that the county's CI project began focusing on in 2009. This non-profit program played a central role in forming the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition.

*"Cherokee County's Eat Smart Move More Coalition is special because it's a coalition that represents the county's commitment to create healthier environments for young people."*

— Beth Franco  
Executive Director  
Eat Smart Move More South Carolina

Page Rogers, Community Health Educator for the Upstate Public Health Region, SC DHEC, joined the public health task force in 2012. She facilitated a grant opportunity that funded a broad-based assessment which included a community survey, focus

groups, and studying health data. After much discussion, a strategic plan was created.

"The strategic planning process led to our local mission, and the identification of three priority issues—healthy eating, active living (HE/AL) and tobacco use prevention," Rogers recalled. "One of our first objectives was to create committees around HE/AL and tobacco use prevention. For the HE/AL objective, we then decided to focus on childhood obesity and to become a local chapter of Eat Smart Move More South Carolina."

*(Continued on next page)*

## Cherokee County ESMM Coalition Co-Chair Semi-Finalist for RWJF Leadership Development Program

Christina Cody, who co-chairs the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition, recently became a semi-finalist for in the prestigious Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Leadership Development Program.

If chosen to participate in the three-year program, Cody would have an opportunity to develop high-level leadership skills through professional coaching, networking and an advanced leadership curriculum. The third year of the program includes the initiation of a bold Culture of Health Project.

Page Rogers, who also co-chairs the county's ESMM

Coalition, said "Christina's participation in the Foundation's three year Health Leadership Program would have tremendous impact on Cherokee County as she learns to advocate for systematic change to improve health and health equity through expanded community engagement practices."

Photo by SVM



**Christina Cody**  
Cherokee County  
ESMM Co-Chairman

The Cherokee County ESMM Coalition evaluates its efforts to reduce childhood obesity by closely monitoring the annual reports generated by the Cherokee County School District Body Mass Index (BMI) Project, according to Rogers,

*“The strategic planning process led to our local mission, and the identification of three priority issues—healthy eating, active living (HE/AL) and tobacco use prevention. ... For the HE/AL objective, we then decided to focus on childhood obesity and to become a local chapter of Eat Smart Move More South Carolina.”*

— Page Rogers  
Co-Chairman

Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition

who facilitates the production of the project’s reports.

The Cherokee County BMI Project, which began in 2012, is a collaborative effort between the Cherokee County School District and the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC). The project, which measures the BMI of all first, second and third grade students, is unique in the Upstate (Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties).

Each year, SC DHEC staff measure the height and weight of each student, and use the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Children’s BMI formula for schools to compute BMI and BMI percentiles for each child. Because the study uses the census method rather



Page Rogers  
Co-Chairman,  
Cherokee County  
ESMM Coalition



Bret Baronak  
Community Coordinator,  
Carolina Thread Trail



Doris F. Pearson  
Cherokee County  
Clerk to Council

Bret Baronak (inset middle-right), Community Coordinator for Carolina Thread Trail, spoke on June 1st at the June meeting of Cherokee County’s Eat Smart Move More Coalition. The county’s ESMM Coalition has met at 8:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of each month at the Mary Black Health System facility in Gaffney, but will hold its monthly meetings elsewhere in the future. Representing Cherokee County at the meetings since the chapter was formed several years ago is Doris Pearson (inset bottom-right), Cherokee County Clerk to Council. (Photos by Stuart Morgan)

than the sample method to collect data, results of the BMI studies are considered to be highly reliable.

Public health professionals turn to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the nation's health protection agency, and the RWJF for current science-based health research, meaningful reports that spark change, and best practice interventions. So, the fact that one of these respected agencies—the RWJF—noticed the BMI reports and highlighted the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition's success online in the Foundation's Signs of Progress section makes the recognition special.

"It's an honor that we've caught the attention of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation," said Rogers, who now co-chairs the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition. "We were notified by the Foundation in November 2015 that they wanted to build a web profile to recognize Cherokee County as a Signs of Progress location.

"I believe part of our success is the Coalition's recognition that the environment where we live, learn, work and play has a significant effect on our health," she added. "Through various initiatives, we strive to engage residents, schools, businesses and community leaders in systems and environmental approaches to make health an

*"Our ultimate goal is to create a healthy Cherokee County where all residents have plenty of opportunities to be physically active, and have access to healthy, affordable foods."*

— Page Rogers  
Co-Chairman

Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More Coalition

easier choice. Our ultimate goal is to create a healthy Cherokee County where all residents have plenty of opportunities to be physically active and have access to healthy, affordable foods.

### Cherokee County's ESMM Initiative

The Cherokee County ESMM Coalition has embraced the mission and the tag line of the S.C. Eat Smart Move More Coalition, "Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice," since the coalition became an official ESMM chapter in September 2014. However, unlike the state ESMM Coalition, the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition also focuses on eliminating tobacco use.

Rogers and Christina Cody, the other co-chairman for the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition, partner with community leaders and focus on policy, systems and environmental  
*(Continued on next page)*



The Cherokee County ESMM Coalition met at the Gaffney Visitors' Center on June 1st shortly after holding its June meeting earlier in the morning at the Mary Black Health System facility. Coalition members met at the visitors center to discuss the newly-created Access to Healthy Food Committee, chaired by Kristina Harris. The committee is designed to promote Gaffney Farmers' Market and increase access to healthy food by explaining the availability of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; and Farmers' Market vouchers. Hosting the meeting was LeighAnn Snuggs (inset-above), Director of Marketing and Tourism for the Gaffney Visitors' Center. *(Photos by Stuart Morgan)*

changes that influence people to make healthy choices. The local coalition meets the first Thursday of each month.

The Cherokee County ESMM Coalition's meetings usually include guest speakers, who describe health-related topics of potential interest to the coalition. For example, the Carolina Thread Trail was the subject of a presentation made at the coalition's June meeting.



**CHEROKEE COUNTY EAT SMART MOVE MORE COALITION MEMBERS**—Members of the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition who attended the coalition's June meeting, held on June 1 at the Mary Black Health System facility in Gaffney: (seated, l to r) Doris Pearson, Clerk of Council, Cherokee County; Katherine Anlicker, Communications Coordinator, Mary Black Hospital System Gaffney; Andrea McCracken, Upstate Coordinator, SC Safe Routes to Schools; Maclain Borsich and Kristina Harris, PHASE Team, SCDHEC; Kelsey Allen, Community Coordinator, Eat Smart Move More SC; Heather Swayngim, Administrative Assistant, KNOW(2); (standing, l to r) Dr. Niccie Dearing RN, DC, Vitality Chiropractic of the Upstate; Barbara Cope, Community Volunteer; David Toney, Prevention Specialist, Cherokee County Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse; Tierney Rollins, Prevention Specialist, Cherokee County Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse; Robin Reed, Executive Director, KNOW(2); Page Rogers, Health Educator SCDHEC; Christina Cody, Teacher, Blacksburg High School; and Kerri Stewart, Registered Dietician, Joe R. Utley Heart Resource Center. The following individuals, who actively participate as members of the Cherokee County ESMM Chapter, were unavailable for this photo: Lori Boyd, RN, Coordinator, Joe R. Utley Heart Resource Center; Chris Lemaster, Livestock and Forage Agent, Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service; Hermenia Gardner, Community Volunteer; Evelyn Nelson, RN, School Nurse, Cherokee County School District; Chantel Washington, Community Outreach Coordinator, Gibbs Cancer Center; Sandra Littlejohn, Food Service Director, Cherokee County School District; Sara Cavanese, Health Educator; SCDHEC; Dick Lavender, Community Volunteer; Hannah Miner, Jocillia Johnson, PHASE Team, SCDHEC, and Sharyn Pittman, Co-Coordinator, Healthy Eating Decisions. *(Photo by Stuart Morgan)*

Bret Baronak, Community Coordinator for Carolina Thread Trail, used a PowerPoint presentation to describe the Thread Trail Plan. Adopted in September 2012 by Gaffney City Council, the plan identifies 94 miles of walking and biking trails across 15 counties in North Carolina and South Carolina that will link more than 70 communities. The trail will create connections between natural destinations and area schools across Cherokee County.

Cherokee County ESMM Coalition members also discuss current programs and projects, and upcoming events and opportunities when they meet.

Whenever necessary, they also meet at other times. Immediately after the June meeting, for example, Cherokee County ESMM Coalition members met at the Gaffney Visitors' Center to discuss a newly-created Access to Healthy Food Committee. Chaired by Kristina Harris, the new committee is designed to promote the Gaffney Farmers' Market and increase access to healthy food by explaining the availability of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program; Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; and Farmers' Market vouchers.

"Healthy communities require healthy environments—neighborhoods, schools, childcare centers and workplaces," Rogers explained. "People need environments structured in ways that help them access healthy foods and easily incorporate physical activity into their daily routines.

"Creating healthy environments cannot be done in isolation by any one organization or group," she added. "It requires coordinated and comprehensive efforts. Without a healthy environment, people are more likely to suffer from obesity or one of the many chronic diseases confronting residents of Cherokee County, including diabetes, cancer and heart disease."

#### **Cherokee County's ESMM Coalition Reflects Cherokee County's Concern**

Again, the broad-based, communitywide assessment that Page Rogers facilitated in 2012 generated local interest in prioritizing healthy eating, active living and tobacco use prevention.

Last June, five years after local interest was generated to

address these issues, the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition's success was recognized in a major way.

Yet, the coalition's work continues. The coalition will continue to follow childhood obesity trends, and results will be published in the sixth annual BMI report. In September 2017, Rogers will again facilitate the process at all elementary schools within the Cherokee County school district. As always, the 2017 report's findings will be presented first to the Cherokee County School District superintendent and her staff before it is shared with the school board and released to the Cherokee County ESMM Coalition and the public.

### Still Looking for Partners

Doris F. Pearson, Cherokee County Clerk to Council, has represented the county as a member of the county's ESMM Coalition since it first met in 2015. So, she has witnessed the development, work and success of the local ESMM coalition since then.

"The success of our county's Eat Smart Move More Coalition," Pearson said, "just shows that Cherokee County is concerned about the growing rate of child obesity, and that we're willing to partner with others to ensure that our young children grow up at a healthy weight. We need to make everyone aware of the impact that healthy eating and physical fitness has on our society."

Pearson is responsible for encouraging the county's ESMM Coalition to move forward and bring new ideas to the floor. She is also responsible for reporting the local ESMM Coalition's activities to Cherokee County Council.

"Our Coalition continues to grow and reach out to all organizations to focus on nutrition, promoting physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices for our children," Pearson said. "We set goals, and we don't stop until we meet them. In order for us to continue to work, we must continue to reach out to other organizations and concerned citizens to get a broader view of what must be accomplished to teach our young children, our



**CHEROKEE COUNTY COUNCIL**—Committed to creating a healthy community, one of the key components of Cherokee County's ESMM Coalition, are Cherokee County Council Members: (l to r) Cherokee County Council Members Charles T. Mathis Jr., Ronnie David Smith and Michael (Mike) Alan Fowlkes; Council Chairman Timothy (Tim) Floyd Spencer; and Council Member Tracy A. McDaniel; Council Vice Chairman John Quay Little. Cherokee County Administrator Administrator Holland Belue joined council for the photo. (Photo by Stuart Morgan)

future generation, the importance of eating healthier and becoming more physically active.

"I love our county's Eat Smart Move More Coalition, and I believe we're making a difference," Pearson added. "Just look

*"The success of our county's Eat Smart Move More Coalition just shows that Cherokee County is concerned about the growing rate of child obesity, and that we're willing to partner with others to ensure that our young children grow up at a healthy weight."*

— Doris F. Pearson  
Cherokee County Clerk to Council

at the recognition we received last June from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. We still have a lot of work before us, but I have no doubt that we'll achieve more of our goals as we continue to collaborate and make new partners."



## Visit These Links

### Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Signs of Progress, June 23, 2016

[www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/signs-of-progress.html](http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/signs-of-progress.html)

### Cherokee County School District 2016 Body Mass Index (BMI) Report

[http://www.scdhec.gov/library/CR-011271\\_2016.pdf](http://www.scdhec.gov/library/CR-011271_2016.pdf)

### Cherokee County Eat Smart Move More

<http://eatsmartmovemoresc.org/cherokeecounty>



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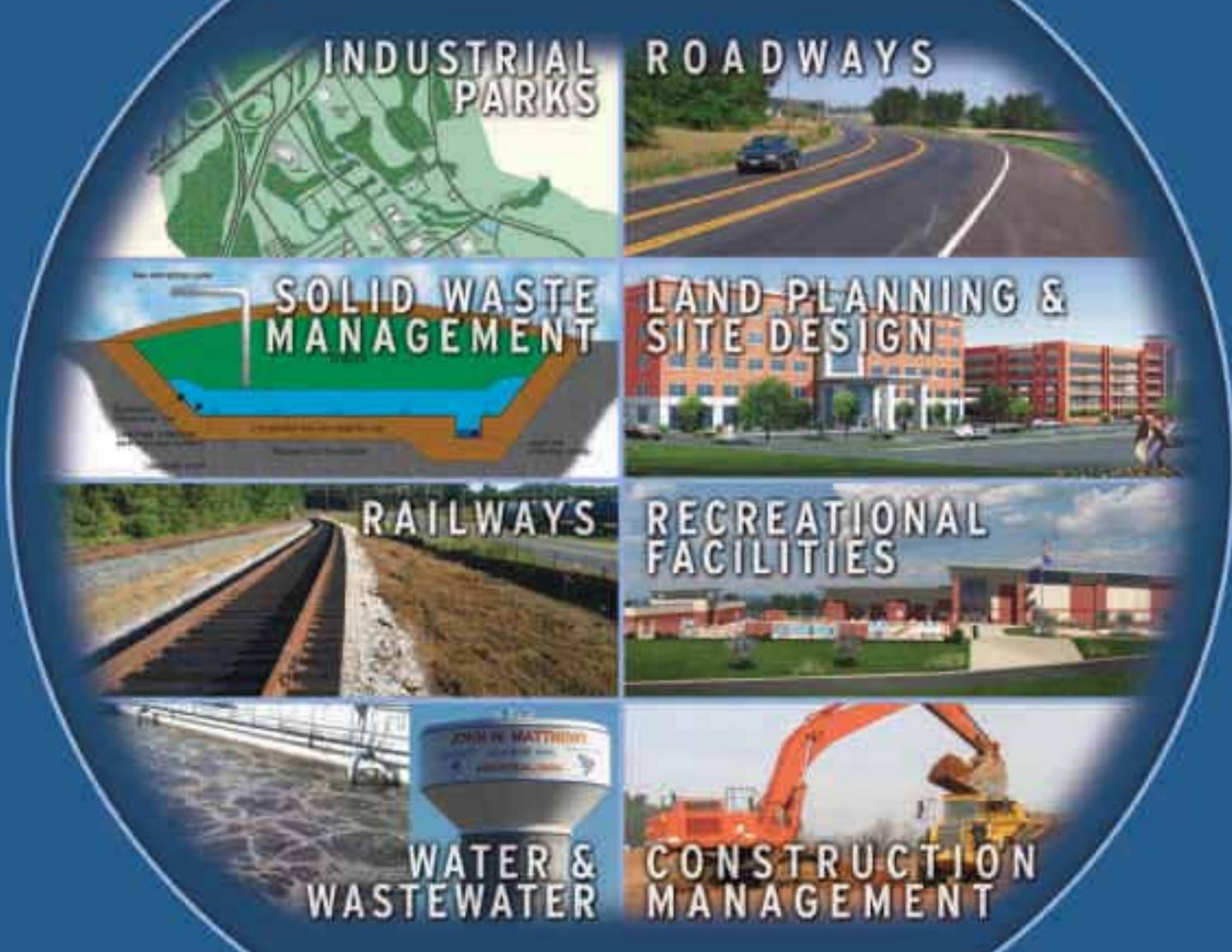
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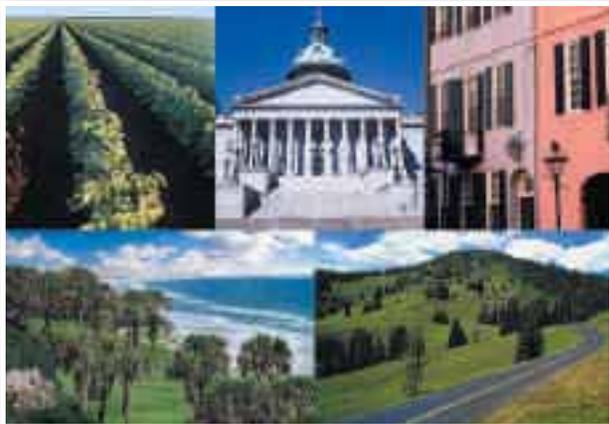
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**– Deepal Eliatamby, P.E.**

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## SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

# Purpose of the SCAC

- To promote more efficient county governments
- To study, discuss and recommend improvements in government
- To investigate and provide means for the exchange of ideas and experiences between county officials
- To promote and encourage education of county officials
- To collect, analyze and distribute information about county government
- To cooperate with other organizations
- To promote legislation which supports efficient administration of local government in South Carolina

❖ For more information about the SCAC, please contact:

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Association of Counties**  
P.O. Box 8207  
1919 Thurmond Mall  
Columbia, SC 29202-8207  
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## Welcome SCAC's Newest Patron!



Oakbridge Consulting & Management, LLC (OBCM) is a full service Agency Construction Management firm formed in January 2015 by Paul Moscati and Eric Monroe. Based in Columbia, S.C., services offered include program/project management, estimating, scheduling, cost management, and public-private collaboration. OBCM is primarily focused on serving clients in county/municipal government, K-12, higher education, and healthcare sectors.

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PalmettoPride would like to be your resource for community improvement, from grants to law enforcement needs. Our Litter Trashes Everyone marionette show is free to all public elementary schools, providing a fun, educational experience teaching children about litter and recycling. We can help you create a litter-free event. We have supplies for community cleanup events. We have a camera loan program for investigating illegal dumpsites and other litter hot spots. We can train your employees on the impact of blight with Broken Windows Training and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Our PalmettoPride grants can help you create litter eradication programs or create green spaces in your county.

We invite you to learn more about PalmettoPride, Keep South Carolina Beautiful, Adopt-a-Highway, Palmetto Prideways and all of our programs at [www.palmettopride.org](http://www.palmettopride.org).



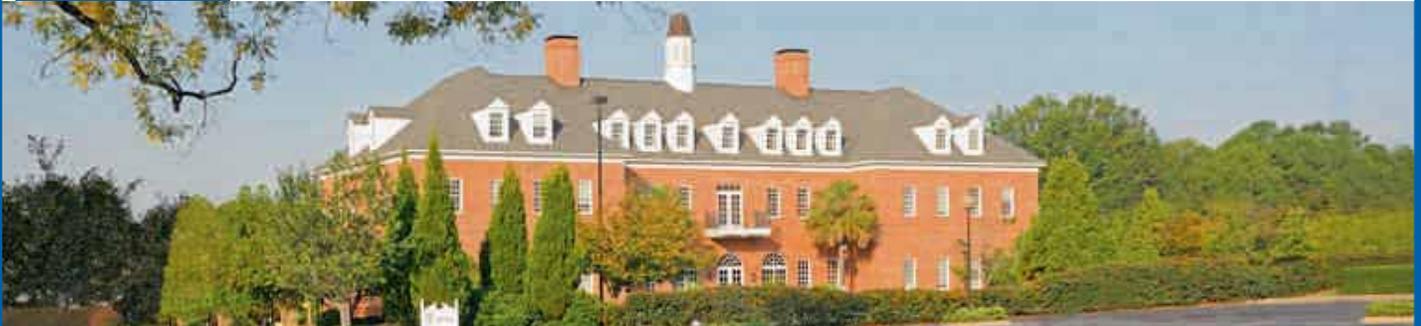


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## SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES



*Building Stronger Counties for Tomorrow*

### Need Information? Visit SCAC's Website at [www.SCCounties.org](http://www.SCCounties.org)

The South Carolina Association of Counties' website is the primary Internet resource for information about South Carolina's counties and issues affecting county government. The website is a dynamic tool that provides access to information about services such as education and training opportunities, research capabilities, and legal assistance.

Visitors to [SCCounties.org](http://www.SCCounties.org) will find conference schedules, legislative initiatives, and numerous Association publications. The website has information on key financial programs offered by SCAC, unique county-specific publications, legislative monitoring, and ad hoc surveys.

The site provides general information for all 46 counties—including contact information for county officials, links to county websites, and job postings. [SCCounties.org](http://www.SCCounties.org) is also a conduit to a number of other resources such as the National Association of Counties, the S.C. General Assembly, U.S. Congress, federal agencies, as well as national and state associations.

The SCAC staff remains ready to receive and assist with any special requests. To facilitate this communication, please refer to the SCAC staff list on page 23 or SCAC's website to obtain respective email addresses.



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ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

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## WHAT IS THE SCAC?

**South Carolina Association of Counties, chartered on June 22, 1967, is the only organization dedicated to statewide representation of county government in South Carolina. A nonpartisan, nonprofit organization with a full-time staff in Columbia, SCAC is governed by a 29-member Board of Directors selected by county officials at the Association's Annual Conference.**



**Counties have made tremendous progress since the enactment of the Home Rule Act in 1975. County government has also become more diverse in order to meet the increasing needs of its citizens. SCAC is dedicated to providing programs and services that equip county officials with the tools to govern effectively.**

## CONFERENCES

■ SCAC provides many opportunities for county officials to meet and learn, among them:

★ Mid-Year Conference — Held in late winter in Columbia, this conference enables all county officials to become better informed about the Association's legislative program. The Association also hosts a reception for all members of the legislature during this conference.

★ Annual Conference — Held in August, this conference is open to all elected and appointed officials. The conference includes a business session, general session, workshops, group meetings, and exhibits of county products and services.

★ Legislative Conference — Held in December, this conference allows members of the Legislative Committee to discuss and adopt a legislative program for the upcoming year. The committee is composed of each council chairman along with the Association's Board of Directors.

## EDUCATION

■ The Association, in cooperation with the Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities at the College of Charleston and the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University, conducts the Institute of Government for County Officials (Level I, Level II, and Advanced levels).

This certificate program helps county officials enhance their skills and abilities. Courses are offered at the Annual and Mid-Year Conferences and at the County Council Coalition Meeting in the fall.

SCAC also sponsors a number of continuing education webcasts for county officials and employees throughout the year at no charge to counties. Within a few weeks after the live broadcast, county officials and employees are able to access the session as a video on demand via <http://www.sccounties.org>.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

■ SCAC offers a number of financial services to its member counties. The Association sponsors two self-funded insurance trusts to provide workers' compensation and property and liability coverage. The trusts are designed specifically to meet the unique needs of local governments.

SCAC also offers the following services through affiliate organizations: GovDeals internet auction of surplus assets; Tax Management Associates, Inc. property tax audit services; and competitive purchasing discounts through Forms and Supply, Inc. and the U.S. Communities purchasing cooperative.

## LEGAL ASSISTANCE

■ SCAC provides legal assistance to county governments by rendering legal opinions, preparing *amicus* briefs, drafting ordinances, and consulting with other county officials.

The Association provides support to counties involved in litigation that might affect other counties. It also sponsors the Local Government Attorneys' Institute, which provides six hours of continuing legal education for local government attorneys.

## SETOFF DEBT PROGRAM

■ South Carolina counties are able to collect delinquent emergency medical services debts, magistrate and family court fines, hospital debts, as well as other fees owed to the counties through SCAC's Setoff Debt Collection Program.

Debts are submitted through the Association to the S.C. Department of Revenue to be matched with income tax refunds. The debt is deducted from a refund and returned through SCAC to the claimant.

## LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION

■ The S.C. General Assembly convenes each January in Columbia and adjourns sine die in May. One in every four bills introduced affects county governments.

SCAC monitors each bill as it is introduced and keeps its members up-to-date on all legislative activity with a weekly *Friday Report*. The Association also dispatches Legislative Alerts and publishes *Acts That Affect Counties* each year.

## PUBLIC INFORMATION

■ SCAC publishes an annual *Directory of County Officials* listing addresses and telephone numbers of county offices and their elected and appointed officials. The Association also publishes *Carolina Counties Newsletter* five times a year to keep the Association's membership informed about legislation and various county news. *County Focus Magazine* is published four times a year and features articles on county trends, innovation, and other subjects of interest to county officials—including a "County Update" section.

## RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

■ SCAC provides research and technical assistance in many areas to those counties that request it. The Association staff annually responds to hundreds of inquiries from county officials ranging from simple requests for a sample ordinance to more complex questions requiring considerable research. The Association also develops technical research bulletins and conducts surveys on a variety of subjects. Regular publications such as the *Wage and Salary Report*, *Home Rule Handbook*, *A Handbook for County Government*

*in South Carolina*, and *Case Law Affecting Local Government* are made available to county officials.

SCAC's website address is:

<http://www.SCCounties.org>

The site provides county officials with the latest information on SCAC programs, services and meetings as well as legislative information, research and survey results, and links to other local government resources.



SOUTH CAROLINA  
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

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# SCAC-Sponsored Insurance Trusts



## History of the Trusts

The S.C. Workers' Compensation Trust (SCCWCT) dates back to Nov. 1, 1984, when 11 counties began the fund with less than a half million dollars. More than 30 years later, the SCCWCT has grown to include 42 counties plus 47 additional agencies with ties to county government. The Property & Liability Trust (SCCP&LT) began on Aug. 1, 1995, with four members. The membership has grown to include 16 counties and 10 county-related agencies.

## Boards of Trustees

The Trusts were designed by and for county government with the goal of providing insurance to counties at the lowest rates possible, while providing services uniquely tailored to the needs of county governments. The Boards of Trustees are made up of county officials who are elected by the SCAC's Board of Directors. Although not a requirement, both boards currently share the same membership.

## Risk Management

Because member contributions (premiums) are based both on the accident histories of the individual counties (experience modifiers) and on the membership as a whole, both Trusts employ very aggressive risk management strategies. The philosophy adopted by the Trusts is that, if accidents are caused, they can be prevented. Risk Management services are provided by the SCAC staff. The payoff is lower premiums and a safer working environment.

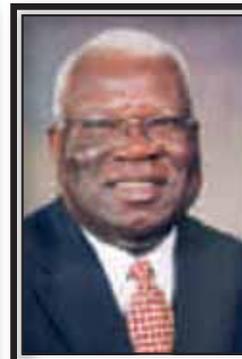
## Claims Administration and Management

Ariel Third Party Administrators provides workers' compensation claims administration for the Workers' Compensation Trust. The SCAC staff provides claims administration for the Property & Liability Trust and provides the administration of both Trusts. ■

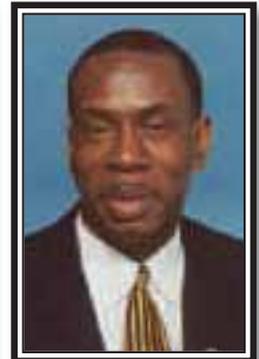
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# Cyber Realities: Where We Are Now

The following article is reprinted with permission from Alliant Insurance Services\*.

## New Opportunities

**M**odern business is conducted in a highly networked, data-rich environment. Dynamic and developing technologies are currently and continually being leveraged for increased operational capabilities. Corporations have the ability to transport data far and wide, allowing for business to be conducted easily at small and large scales, locally and globally.

Networked infrastructures keep assets—tangible and idea-based—interconnected and integrated, streamlining resource organization and facilitating internal collaboration. This improved structuring forms the foundation for automation that can free employees from some of the more time-consuming, bureaucratic aspects of their jobs, giving them more time to do the work that keeps businesses growing.

Technological advances are not only a boon to intra-corporation functions, but also provide new avenues for engagement between companies and their customers and clients. Computer networking, data analytics software, electronic transactions and digital media communications—all of these cyber developments are becoming standard aspects of running an organization. They are being adopted because they are seen as materially improving the conduct of modern business.

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## New Risks

Opportunity and innovation do not come without challenges. In any business endeavor, the other side of opportunity is risk, and this is no less true of running a business with technological enhancements. A bigger cyber presence means more cyber exposure.

Innovation often outpaces regulation, and so companies tend to have new capabilities before knowing the best way to implement their use and adopt best-use policies. Advanced capabilities may also not initially be very secure, and such technology requires continual monitoring and upgrades to find and remediate vulnerabilities. These kinds of system changes take time for employees and other network users to adjust to, which introduces further opportunity for error.

There are many exciting trends in current business technology, but the potential benefit of each one must be measured against the facts of each trend's inherent weak points. Exploitation of these vulnerabilities cannot be seen only as a distant possibility, but must be viewed as a constant threat. Building awareness and preparing for challenges are critical elements of a successful risk management strategy.

## Current Trends in Business Technology: Bring Your Own Device

With the near ubiquity of portable, network-enabled device ownership, there is growing appreciation among businesses for the institution of Bring-Your-Own-Device (BYOD) policies. When employees supply their own work devices (laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc.), the company saves money, no longer having to worry about purchasing and continually upgrading the equipment its employees need to do their jobs. These policies also benefit employees who would have and did buy such devices on their

*(Continued on next page)*



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own in the first place, in the sense that employees get to work on devices with which they are familiar and comfortable. This convenience does not come without a price.

First among issues involving BYOD policies is the risk of loss or theft of such devices, as they often do not have the security provisions standardized through company devices. As well as being more susceptible to displacement, employee-owned and maintained devices may lack adequate security software and applications, making such devices more susceptible to malicious digital exploitation and attacks. Interfacing insecure non-company work devices with company-maintained internal devices comes with the risk of transmitting malware and computer viruses from the less secure personal device to the company network.

### **Remote Access**

Part of the appeal of BYOD policies is that they are part of a wider technological movement of remote access. It is increasingly common and relatively easy for employees to work outside of the traditional office environment as more and more devices and programs allow for people to work wherever they are. Remote access to a common digital location also streamlines collaboration, in the sense that employees can jointly access resources without having to physically transport or exchange them. Troubles with remote access arise when employees try to gain access through insecure networks or insecure devices—malicious software can slip into the company’s secure digital spaces in this way.

### **Cloud Storage**

While BYOD policies externalize the costs of acquisition and maintenance of work devices, cloud storage services allow companies to externalize the costs of data storage. Businesses can save money and effort by hosting information with a third party as opposed to acquiring and maintaining internal company servers – in many cases, the fees for cloud storage are significantly less than the expense would be for internal storage capabilities. This service helps many companies stay focused on their main business goals, and negates the need for internal specialists on technologies that are not their consumer product. Trusting a third party with sensitive information may save money, but it also comes with some uncertainty as to the security of the cloud service. Even if sensitive data is exposed when the cloud storage company experiences a data breach, the ultimate responsibility for the security of that information lies with the business to which the information was originally and officially entrusted.

### **Digitized Records**

BYOD policies, remote access capabilities and cloud storage services all involve the access, use and maintenance of digital information and digital records collected and compiled by or on behalf of a company. The ability to store information about employees, customers, clients and/or patients allows for a smoother general operation of business. Payment and compensation can be dealt with quickly and efficiently, interactions with clients can be tailored to their specific characteristics and needs, financial

and medical information can be accessed easily and completely in emergencies. In this context, however, knowledge is both an advantage and a vulnerability. The more records a company has to use, the more information it also has to lose. The value of sensitive records means that there are constantly external and internal parties looking to profit from the illicit access and distribution of such records.

### **Web Presence**

Though not as recent a development as BYOD, remote access, or cloud storage, Internet expansion is a project for many companies, and for good reason. Online, companies can be constantly available to their customers and clients through their web sites and social media accounts. They can provide customers with information in accessible, easy-to-understand formats, in the digital spaces their customers frequent. Having an interactive web site enables a company to solicit additional feedback on products, present testimonials from current customers for prospective clients to view, provide news and reports as part of transparency measures, and preview new products and services. Social media presence—Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and so on—gives companies a space in which to interact with disparate consumers in real time, and allows for companies to get a sense of the word-of-mouth commentary on their products.

Maintaining a web site and a social media presence can get complicated. A web site is a publication platform, and laws regarding copyright, trademark, and so on are just as applicable when it comes to materials posted to one’s site. Social media interactions can provide a host of information and commentary from customers and other outside parties, but it is important to remember that the content presented by such parties through social media platforms is owned by those parties, and cannot be reused or repurposed without their explicit consent.

### **Finding the Right Balance**

Clearly, the goal for modern business when it comes to technology is to balance the opportunity with the exposure to optimize the benefits of continuing advances. Having an understanding of the complexities of the dynamic modern business environment is the first step in finding ways to mitigate barriers to further success. Being afraid of the risks inherent in networked landscapes is probably excessive, but companies cannot afford to be ignorant of these risks, either.



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# The IMLA Report

## *Recent U.S. Supreme Court Actions Affect Local Government*

*By Charles W. Thompson Jr.  
Executive Director and General Counsel, IMLA*

**A**t the end of each U.S. Supreme Court term, the Court decides its most controversial cases. Like the rest of us, it puts off until the last its most difficult tasks. With the vacancy on the Court lingering until many of its cases had already been argued, this year's late breaking cases included only a few really significant decisions affecting local government, but two of those may be monumental.

*Murr v. Wisconsin* ought to be considered one of the most significant cases for local government that the Court decided this year and when it comes to the use of eminent domain, one of the most significant cases in many years. The State and Local Legal Center and IMLA teamed up to file an amicus brief that the court cited twice in its decision. IMLA members contributed by helping our amicus authors catalogue hundreds of ordinances that addressed the merger of non-conforming lots to show both the long history of these provisions and their near universality.

As in many areas of the country, waterfront property in Wisconsin provides a great location to live and vacation. Before many local governments, especially in rural areas, began implementing land use plans, owners of land along rivers, lakes or the sea sought to maximize the value of their property by either dividing the land into lots and selling the lots or laying out plats and subdividing the land for future sale or development. In some areas, mountain property affords a similar



attraction and owners there did much the same. Often, these areas have some of the most difficult soils for wells and septic systems.

As planning and zoning became more prevalent and as some areas changed from undeveloped to developed, local governments recognized that some lots might be too small and they established minimum lot sizes. When I was a County Attorney, often lack of water and sewer service meant properties needed to be supported by wells and septic systems where the size of a lot and the density of lots could shape how well the property and others in the same watershed might be supported. Lots too small or too densely packed could overwhelm the subterranean water supply so that wells would dry up or where septic systems failed they could not be restored. To address individual property rights while attempting to remediate the problem of density and these undersized lots, communities adopted measures that tried to eliminate non-conforming lots without obliterating a person's investment in a property. The common regulatory choice

directed that if non-conforming lots came into common ownership, then the lots were merged for zoning and subdivision purposes and could not be separated as individual building lots except in conformity with the regulations.

Such was the law in Wisconsin. The Murrs' parents bought a lot along the river for a vacation cottage. They later bought another lot but titled it in their business. So, while they held the lots in separate title, the lots were not merged under Wisconsin law. Ultimately, both properties came into the common ownership of the Murrs' children and under St. Croix County and Wisconsin law were deemed merged. The Murrs sought a variance, but were denied and then filed a claim that the property was "taken" and their Fifth Amendment right to compensation denied. The Wisconsin Supreme Court concluded that the state law did not effect a "taking," and the Murrs sought and the Supreme Court granted certiorari.

The Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment prohibits the government from "taking" private property for public use without "just compensation." That restriction seems pretty clear, but when has the government "taken" property? In the context of this case the question included whether the court should look at each individual lot as a separate piece of property or if it ought to combine the properties to determine if limitations on one parcel amounted to a taking. Justice

*(Continued on next page)*

Kennedy, writing for the majority in a 5-3 decision applied a three-factor test which led to the conclusion that the lots should be viewed as one parcel.

First, state law and local ordinance treat the property as one for a “specific and legitimate purpose.” As the Court noted, citing the SLLC/IMLA brief: “The merger provision here is ... a legitimate exercise of government power, as reflected by its consistency with a long history of state and local merger regulations that originated nearly a century ago.” Again citing the SLLC/IMLA brief, the Court further noted that focusing only on lot lines would “frustrate municipalities’ ability to implement minimum lot size regulations by casting doubt on the many merger provisions that exist nationwide today.”

Second, the physical characteristics of the property in this case indicate the parcels should be combined for purposes of takings analysis. The lots were contiguous along their longest edge, are covered with rough terrain which limits use, and are located on a highly regulated river. Justice Kennedy noted that these were not properties separated by distance, with the government claiming that despite that distance they should be viewed as one, rather the properties adjoin and have a common boundary.

“Third, courts should assess the value of the property under the challenged regulation, with special attention to the effect of burdened land on the value of other holdings. Though a use restriction may decrease the market value of the property, the effect may be tempered if the regulated land adds value to the remaining property, such as by increasing privacy, expanding recreational space, or preserving surrounding natural beauty.”

In this case, one lot brings prospective value to the other; the “special relationship of the lots is further shown by their combined valuation.” One lot appraised at \$40,000; the other at \$373,000; but the combined lots appraised at \$689,300. The restriction on using the individual lots is mitigated by the benefits of using the property as an integrated whole, allowing increased privacy and recreational space, plus an optimal location for any improvements.

This relationship is evident in the lots’ combined valuation.

Looking at the parcels as a whole, the Court concluded no compensable taking occurred in this case. The Murrs could still build a bigger house on the combined lots, and they cannot claim they “reasonably expected to sell or develop their lots separately given the regulations which predated their acquisition of both lots.” The effect of the regulation was insignificant. Finally, the governmental action was a reasonable land-use regulation, enacted as part of a coordinated federal, state, and local effort to preserve the river and surrounding land.

Wisconsin argued that a bright line test should apply that would focus on property rights as defined under state law. In other words, if the state law merges lots into one, then the takings analysis should consider the unitary parcel only. The Court did not buy that argument claiming that doing so would allow states or local government to define property in ways that would limit their liability for takings under the Federal Constitution. The Murrs on the other hand sought to have the Court simply look at the lots as defined by their deed boundaries. This the majority declined to do and this seemed to be the major stumbling block for the dissenters.

Shortly after the Court announced this astounding victory, it confused us. The Supreme Court denied certiorari in a case it had held for almost a year pending a decision to grant certiorari. That case, *U.S. vs. Lost Tree Village Corp.* involved the question of whether a small lot of apparent wasteland left unbuildable amidst a several thousand lot subdivision was “taken” when the Corps of Engineers denied a wetlands permit for filling it. Many thought that by deciding in *Murr* that the two tracts constituted a single parcel that in *Lost Tree*, the Court would similarly conclude that the small remaining lot was part of the overall development and should not be treated as a stand along parcel. While decisions to deny certiorari do not establish law or precedent, the decision to deny certiorari in *Lost Tree* tends to make the result in *Murr* a bit murky. But, this

is why decisions to deny certiorari cannot hold too much weight; perhaps, each of the members of the majority recognized that Justice Gorsuch might join the three dissenters and then they could capture a fifth vote to reverse the *Murr* holding if *Lost Tree* came before the Court; while the dissenters and Justice Gorsuch viewed the prospect of getting a fifth vote as slim, so shied away as well. So for now, in a case involving a regulatory taking “[b]ecause our test for regulatory taking requires us to compare the value that has been taken from the property with the value that remains in the property, one of the critical questions is determining how to define the unit of property ‘whose value is to furnish the denominator of the fraction.’” To answer this question, the Court instructs that three factors must be considered: (1) the treatment of the land under state and local law; (2) the physical characteristics of the land; and (3) the prospective value of the regulated land.

In another significant decision, the Court concluded that a Missouri policy that prevented religious schools from participating in a grant program open to secular schools violated the First Amendment. In *Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer* the Supreme Court held 7-2 that Missouri violated Trinity Lutheran Church’s free exercise of religion rights when it refused, on the basis of religion, to award the Church a grant to resurface its playground with recycled tires.

Trinity’s preschool ranked fifth among 44 applicants to receive a grant from Missouri’s Scrap Tire Program. Missouri’s Department of Natural Resources (DNR) informed the preschool it didn’t receive a grant because of its policy directed at enforcing the Missouri Constitution that prohibits public funds from being used “directly or indirectly, in aid of any church, sect, or denomination of religion.”

“That policy, in the Department’s view, was compelled by Article I, Section 7 of the Missouri Constitution, which provides: “That no money shall ever be taken from the public treasury, directly or indirectly, in aid of any church, sect or denomination of religion, or in aid of  
(See *IMLA*, P. 34)

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(Continued from P. 32)

any priest, preacher, minister or teacher thereof, as such; and that no preference shall be given to nor any discrimination made against any church, sect or creed

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of religion, or any form of religious faith or worship."

Trinity sued the DNR claiming it violated the Church's First Amendment free exercise of religion rights.

Chief Justice Roberts recounted a long history of cases that work between the joints of the Free Exercise Clause and the Establishment Clause by noting that over 50 years ago, the Court had concluded that denying a benefit based on religion amounted to a violation of the Free Exercise Clause:

"As the Court put it more than 50 years ago, "[i]t is too late in the day to doubt that the liberties of religion and expression may be infringed by the denial of or placing of conditions upon a benefit or privilege." *Sherbert*, 374 U.S., at 404; see also *McDaniel*, 435 U.S., at 633 (Brennan, J., concurring in judgment) (The "proposition—that the law does not interfere with free exercise because it does not directly prohibit religious activity, but merely conditions eligibility for office on its abandonment—is ... squarely rejected by precedent")."

Thus, the Department's policy gave Trinity Lutheran an unconstitutional choice: participate in the benefits program or stop operating as a church. Such a choice expressly discriminated against religion and that discrimination is subject to the most "exacting scrutiny," which the Department could not support by merely wanting to avoid religious establishment concerns.

The Court concluded the opinion with a powerful statement after recounting the historical plea by a Maryland legislator to its General Assembly in 1818 to eliminate a ban on Jews holding public office: "The consequence is, in all likelihood, a few extra scraped knees. But the exclusion of Trinity Lutheran from a public benefit for which it is otherwise qualified, solely because it is a church, is odious to our Constitution all the same, and cannot stand."

As Amanda Kellar, IMLA's Director of Legal Advocacy and its Amicus program, put it: "Whether this case is really just about "a few extra scraped knees," is up for debate. The Justices disputed the breadth of this case as only four Justices joined in the following footnote: "This

case involves express discrimination based on religious identity with respect to playground resurfacing. We do not address religious uses of funding or other forms of discrimination." Justices Thomas and Gorsuch wrote separately to indicate they did not concur with this footnote as they believed it put too narrow of a scope on the decision. ...

"Though this case involves a state grant program, this case will surely result in more litigation for local governments as they also provide grants. Is this case really just about a playground and some "scraped knees," or is Justice Sotomayor right that the Court's ruling profoundly changed the relationship between church and state? Some commentators are already wondering what this case means for school voucher programs and whether it will require state and local governments to include religious entities in these programs. While these questions linger, one thing seems clear, we can expect more litigation as a result of this opinion."

IMLA's Amicus program supports local governments in a wide variety of issues important to local autonomy and protecting local governments from expanded liability. We are engaged in courts around the country supporting cities and counties in cases involving Home Rule and preemption, tort liability and attacks on municipal governance. This past year, IMLA filed Amicus briefs in over 30 cases in state courts, federal courts and in the Supreme Court of the United States.

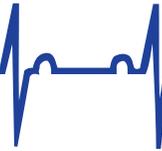


*IMLA helps local government attorneys whose municipalities are members and supports local government throughout the U.S. as an amicus in many cases at the U.S. Supreme Court, in federal circuits and in state supreme courts. IMLA also provides local government attorneys with a forum to seek help and to gain understanding of the law. IMLA offers a number of low-cost programs to help attorneys and city/county managers keep abreast of emerging issues and to refresh their knowledge of local government law. For more information, contact Chuck Thompson at [cthompson@imla.org](mailto:cthompson@imla.org) or (202) 742-1016.*



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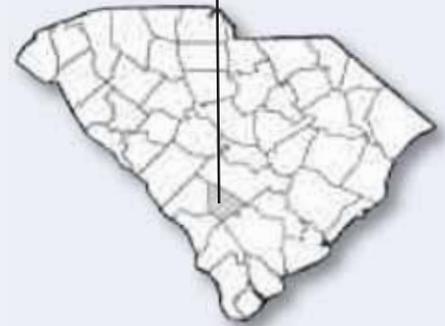


# A Roadside Guide to Bamberg County

## *The County's Role in the American War for Independence*

By Alexia Jones Helsley  
[www.historyismybag.com](http://www.historyismybag.com)

### Bamberg County



See South Carolina  
 County Map,  
 P. 47

**B**amberg is one of South Carolina's late 19th century counties. Created in 1897 from Barnwell County, Bamberg lies in the upper coastal plain. During the American Revolution, the area was part of Old Orangeburg District. It was also a hotly contested area between Loyalists and Patriots. One of those contests provides a vivid window on the dark days of internecine conflict in the Carolina interior.



Rush's Mill

The site of Rush's Mill lies on the county line between Bamberg and Barnwell counties. Located on George's Creek, the area was the focus of Loyalist-Patriot conflict in the waning months of the Revolution in South Carolina. Despite the surrender of British Lieutenant General Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown on Oct. 19, 1781, fighting continued in South Carolina until Dec. 14, 1782. The British were reluctant to surrender Charleston, their "Crown Jewel," and consequently, the British and their Loyalist allies did not evacuate Charleston until Dec. 14, 1782, more than a year after Yorktown.

During those anxious months, there were numerous skirmishes across the state with Patriot and Loyalist casualties. Although documentation is limited, traditionally, one of the Patriots who died during this time was George Hartzog. Most family historians claim a 1730s birthdate for Hartzog, a German or German-speaking Swiss immigrant, who came to South Carolina, settled in present-day Bamberg County, and married. The colony of South Carolina granted George and his brother, Tobias



Hartzog, hundreds of acres of land on the waters of the Edisto River. George's land was on Pen's Branch. The Hartzog brothers were Patriots, and Tobias furnished corn, beef and other supplies for the American cause.

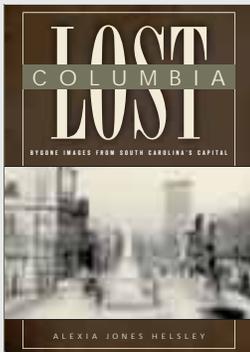
Details of the encounter at Rush's Mill are sketchy. According to some sources, George Hartzog clashed with Loyalists near modern Olar while defending a slave. The Loyalists allegedly were torturing the slave, threatening to hang him, if he did not disclose the location of Patriots in the area. During the intervention, Loyalists captured George Hartzog, and a Loyalist named Blichtington stabbed him to death.

During the 18th century, several Blichtingtons (variant spellings) lived in South Carolina. In 1767, one of them, William Blichtington received a grant from the colony for 300 acres on the Edisto River in Colleton County.

The murder of George Hartzog left his second wife, Catherine, a widow. In 1784, the State of South Carolina paid her for furnishing beef and sheep for the Patriot cause during the American Revolution. Catherine's father, Adam Snell, was also a Patriot. In 1775, the Provincial Congress

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in Charleston appointed him a member of the committee assigned to enforce the Continental Association in St. Matthew Parish.

The Continental Association was a non-importation agreement created by the Continental Congress in response to the Coercive Acts. The Coercive Acts were a series of acts enacted to punish Boston for destroying tea during the Boston Tea Party. Among other actions, the acts closed the port of Boston. The Continental Congress planned to use the trade embargo to force Parliament to rescind the acts.

The story of George Hartzog's sacrifice reverberates through the years. In 1898, his great-granddaughter wrote a letter retelling the story to a relative. In 2003, the Morris Family Reunion erected a memorial to George Hartzog. In part, the memorial states: "According to family tradition, toward the end of the American Revolution, George Hartzog was routed from his home in Blackville, South Carolina, was captured and executed by a Tory at Rush's Mill in 1782."

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*Also see advertising index, page 48*



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★ *Counties Reporting in This Issue of County Update:*

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| Dillon       | Richland     |
| Dorchester   | Saluda       |
| Edgefield    | Spartanburg  |
| Fairfield    | Sumter       |
| Florence     | Union        |
| ★ Georgetown | Williamsburg |
| Greenville   | York         |

# County Update



See South Carolina  
County Map,  
Page 47

*Keeping you informed  
about what's happening in  
South Carolina's counties.*

## COUNTY FOCUS

This section of *County Focus Magazine* provides South Carolina county officials an opportunity to submit newsworthy items that may be of interest to the magazine's readers. For more information, please contact SCAC's Public Information Office at 1-800-922-6081.

### Bamberg County

● In June, Bamberg County hired **Mary Tilton** as Public Information Officer and Keep Bamberg County Beautiful Coordinator. She replaces **Mallory Biering**, recently hired as Director of the Keep South Carolina Beautiful and Community Outreach Program Manager for Palmetto Pride, based in Columbia. Tilton will manage Bamberg County's website and



# SCAC Presidents

2016	Julie J. Armstrong <i>Charleston County</i>	2000	James H. Rozier Jr. <i>Berkeley County</i>	1984	Charlie I. Crews <i>Hampton County</i>
2015	John Q. Atkinson Jr. <i>Marion County</i>	1999	Polly C. Jackson <i>Lancaster County</i>	1983	James P. Whitlock <i>Pickens County</i>
2014	James R. Frazier <i>Horry County</i>	1998	Robert R. Nash Sr. <i>Pickens County</i>	1982	Lonnie Hamilton III <i>Charleston County</i>
2013	Joseph R. Branham <i>Chester County</i>	1997	Alzena Robinson <i>Bamberg County</i>	1981	Alfred B. Schooler <i>Georgetown County</i>
2012	Charles T. Edens <i>Sumter County</i>	1996	Betty T. Roper <i>Clarendon County</i>	1980	Howard A. Taylor <i>Charleston County</i>
2011	Joseph B. Dill <i>Greenville County</i>	1995	George E. Bomar <i>Greenville County</i>	1979	Marjorie H. Sharpe <i>Lexington County</i>
2010	R. Carlisle Roddey <i>Chester County</i>	1994	Raymond C. Eubanks Jr. <i>Spartanburg County</i>	1978	Berry L. Mobley <i>Lancaster County</i>
2009	Diane B. Anderson <i>Laurens County</i>	1993	William L. McBride <i>Beaufort County</i>	1977	E.E. Johnson <i>Hampton County</i>
2008	L. Gregory Pearce Jr. <i>Richland County</i>	1992	Belle J. Kennette <i>Greenwood County</i>	1976	Harold L. King <i>Darlington County</i>
2007	K.G. "Rusty" Smith Jr. <i>Florence County</i>	1991	James R. McGee <i>Orangeburg County</i>	1975	Jack Q. Gerrald <i>Horry County</i>
2006	Belinda D. Copeland <i>Darlington County</i>	1990	Kenneth R. Huckaby <i>Spartanburg County</i>	1974	Arthur H. Burton <i>Charleston County</i>
2004-05	Waymon Mumford <i>Florence County</i>	1989	Lowell C. (Butch) Spires <i>Lexington County</i>	1973	James O. Thomson <i>Spartanburg County</i>
2004	Barrett S. Lawrimore <i>Charleston County</i>	1988	David K. Summers Jr. <i>Calhoun County</i>	1972	J. Hugh McCutchen <i>Williamsburg County</i>
2003	Gonza L. Bryant <i>Greenwood County</i>	1987	Danny E. Allen <i>Spartanburg County</i>	1971	John L. Greer <i>Union County</i>
2002	James A. Coleman <i>Laurens County</i>	1986	O.V. Player Jr. <i>Sumter County</i>	1969-70	J. Mitchell Graham <i>Charleston County</i>
2001	Steve S. Kelly Jr. <i>Kershaw County</i>	1985	Sue H. Roe <i>Aiken County</i>	1967-68	Charles W. Lawrimore <i>Georgetown County</i>

social media pages, create and disseminate county press releases to the local media, and assist with public education and awareness of county news and events. She previously served as coordinator for Bamberg County's Keep Bamberg County Beautiful program, and will continue to work with the program's board members and volunteers in their beautification and litter reduction efforts. She will provide assistance in grant writing, administration, public education and outreach.

Before moving to Bamberg, Tilton served as Executive Director of Back Bay Restoration Foundation in Virginia Beach where she created the first Junior Refuge Biologist program with the nearby Back Bay Wildlife Refuge. She increased organizational grant funding by more than 75 percent while working closely with local government to create plans to preserve rural areas of Virginia Beach, and supervised a group of volunteers, who helped in beautification and cleanup efforts. She also worked as a science educator for students attending the fifth through twelfth grades, and community college.

Tilton received her Bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of New Hampshire and Master's of Science degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Science from Virginia Tech.

- In May, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's Bureau of Environmental Health Services awarded Bamberg County a grant for \$14,644. The Mosquito Control Grant provides funds to purchase additional insecticides and improved spraying equipment. The grant also funds training in effective mosquito control procedures. The grant application was prepared by **Bill Johnson**, Bamberg County's Director of Operations, and **Mallory Biering**, former Keep Bamberg County Beautiful Coordinator.

- In April, Bamberg County hired **Farrell Pulaski** as Environmental Officer to replace **David Harley**, who recently accepted a position with the Bamberg County Sheriff's Department. Pulaski, who began working for the county in April, will enforce the county's litter ordinances, and help Keep Bamberg County Beautiful's education programs.

A U.S. Navy veteran, he previously worked for the S.C. Department of Corrections for five years. He also worked for the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SC DNR) for 24 years, serving his last five years as a Deputy Wildlife Officer. While working for SC DNR, Pulaski served in many areas across the state, including Colleton, Dorchester, Beaufort, Jasper, Orangeburg, Calhoun and Bamberg counties.

*(Continued on next page)*



## Webcasts & Webinars for 2017

Webcasts and webinars will be published on this calendar when scheduled.

For more information, please contact Susan B. Turkopuls, SCAC, at (803) 252-7255 or [sturkopuls@scac.sc](mailto:sturkopuls@scac.sc). Or visit SCAC's website at: <http://www.sccounties.org/education-training>

## SCAC's 2017-18 Conference Calendar

Aug. 15	Setoff Debt/Gear <i>Embassy Suites, Columbia</i>
Sept. 13-14	Policy Steering Committee Meetings <i>SCAC Office, Columbia</i>
Sept. 14	Continuing Education Update for Risk Managers <i>Embassy Suites, Columbia</i>
Oct. 18 Oct. 19	Institute of Government County Council Coalition <i>Embassy Suites, Columbia</i>
Nov. 7-8	Policy Steering Committee Meetings <i>SCAC Office, Columbia</i>
Nov. 30-Dec. 2	Legislative Conference <i>Renaissance Charleston, Charleston</i>
Dec. 8	S.C. Local Government Attorneys' Institute <i>DoubleTree by Hilton, Columbia</i>
<b>2018</b>	
Jan. 24-25	S.C. Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting <i>Marriott Grande Dunes, Myrtle Beach</i>
Feb. 21 Feb. 22	Mid-Year Conference Institute of Government <i>Embassy Suites, Columbia</i>

You can register and pay online for SCAC conferences at [www.sccounties.org/meetings](http://www.sccounties.org/meetings).



## NACo's 2018 Conference Calendar

March 3-7	Legislative Conference <i>Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.</i>
July 13-16	Annual Conference and Exposition <i>Nashville, Tenn.</i>



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❖ For more information about the SCAC, please contact:

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[smorgan@scac.sc](mailto:smorgan@scac.sc)

### Beaufort County

● The Beaufort County Library System held a ribbon-cutting on May 22 at the Bluffton Branch Library in Bluffton. The state-of-the-art bookmobile distributes popular books, audiobooks, and DVDs to more than 40 scheduled stops across Beaufort County. The bookmobile will also make “Special Occasion” stops at community events and popular attractions. Customers will be able to check out and return library materials, request items from library branches, pick up holds and requested materials, apply for a new library card, get assistance from an onboard librarian, and more. The Beaufort County Library System offers many interesting programs and activities. For more information, visit [BeaufortCountyLibrary.org](http://BeaufortCountyLibrary.org) and [FriendsOfTheBeaufortLibrary.com](http://FriendsOfTheBeaufortLibrary.com).

### Charleston County

● The Charleston County Zoning and Planning Department received a Preservation Service Award at an awards ceremony for the county’s Historic Architectural Survey Update. The ceremony was held on June 16 at the S.C. State House.

The Zoning and Planning Department was awarded a Federal Historic Preservation Grant from the National Park Service in 2015 to fund an update to the Charleston County Historical and Architectural Survey, last conducted in 1992. The department formed a subcommittee to assist with a survey update to preserve the local community by documenting more than 1300 resources, focusing on the historical significance of African American communities in the unincorporated areas of Charleston County.

The award, presented by Gov. Henry McMaster, was sponsored by the Office of the Governor, the S.C. Archives and History Foundation, the S.C. Department of Archives and History, and The Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation. The award recognizes excellent accomplishments in preservation, rehabilitation and interpretation of the state’s architectural and cultural heritage. Awards were presented in six categories; Honor, Stewardship, Preservation Service, Heritage Tourism, Elected Official Honor Award and the Governor’s Award.

● In preparation for Hurricane Season, which began on June 1, the Charleston County Emergency Management Department announced that public could find copy of the new 2017 Charleston County Hurricane Guide by clicking on the “Are You Ready?” banner on the front page of the county’s website at <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/>

and downloading an Emergency Management Department smart phone app at <https://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/emergency-management/index.php>

The S.C. Emergency Management Division has also published a 2017 South Carolina Hurricane Guide for residents across South Carolina at <http://www.scemd.org/component/content/article/26-guides-and-brochures/142-south-carolina-hurricane-guide> Copies of the state hurricane guide are provided at South Carolina welcome centers, Walgreens, and some Departments of Motor Vehicles.

● Charleston County held two events in June approaching hurricane season:

1) **June 6**—Charleston County Council recognized **Cathy Haynes**, who retired in June, for her 35 years of service with Charleston County Government. Her service includes five years as a paramedic and 30 years with the Emergency Management Department. Her most noteworthy responses include those to Hurricane *Hugo*, Hurricane *Floyd*, the 2010 repatriation of U.S. citizens from Haiti, the unprecedented floods that devastated the state in October 2015, and the 2016 evacuation and response during Hurricane *Matthew*.

2) **June 7**—Charleston County conducted its annual EOC exercise. The county’s Emergency Management Department, which simulated monitoring and responding to a hurricane, offered interviews and photo opportunities for the media.

● BoomTown, a real estate software development company, will expand its existing Charleston County operations. With an expected joint capital investment of approximately \$20.7 million, the company plans to hire additional employees to accommodate the company’s growth.

Founded in 2006 and headquartered in Charleston, BoomTown is a software development company that offers a robust sales and marketing system for real estate professionals. The system includes a customized real estate website integrated with local MLS data, personalized online advertising, client success management, and a cutting-edge CRM (Customer Relationship Management System) with marketing automation. The BoomTown platform is used by over 20,000 of the top-producing real estate brokerages across the US and Canada.

The company’s new 50,000 square foot headquarters, located at 1505 King St. in Charleston, employs more than 250 employees. The company, which began hiring in January, encourages applicants to visit the company’s career page at [www.boomtownroi.com](http://www.boomtownroi.com).

● Charleston County officials attended

a ceremony on May 15 to launch the construction of the county's new \$30 million Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Located on Palmetto Commerce Parkway in North Charleston, the new recycling center is the culmination of a multi-year development process.

The 57,000 square foot recycling center, designed to meet future regional recycling needs, is expected to be completed in June 2018. It will include a multi-media education center, modern recycling equipment, and administrative offices. The MRF project is managed by Charleston County Facilities Management Department.

**Cherokee County**

● Cherokee County Council Vice Chairman **Rufus Foster Jr.** died on June 22. He served on Cherokee County Council for almost 32 years.

**Clarendon County**

Clarendon County presented service awards from May to July to the following county employees: (May) 15 Years—**Lynden Anthony**, CFO, Finance Department; 5 Years—**Vida McFadden**, Records Clerk, Assessor Department; (June) 30 Years—

**Louis Hilton**, Landfill Supervisor, Public Works Department; 15 Years—**June Gloria Dean Garris**, Corporal, Detention Center; 10 Years—**Herman Floyd**, Sergeant, Sheriff Department; 10 Years—**Charie Major**, Sergeant, Detention Center; 10 Years—**William Stone**, Lieutenant, Sheriff Department; 5 Years—**David Wells Sr.**, Sheriff Department; (July) 15 Years—**Robert Pegram**, Battalion Chief, Fire Department; 10 Years—**Helen Gamble**, Clerk II, Family Court; 5 Years—**Robin Locklear**, Associate Judge, Magistrate Department; 5 years—**Tiffany Wells**, Accounting Specialist, Clerk of Court Department.

**Georgetown County**

● Georgetown County **Treasurer Loretta Washington-Cooper** retired recently after serving the county treasurer's office for more than 45 years. She plans to focus on the ministry and leading a small church she and her husband established on Greentown Road.

Washington-Cooper started working for the Treasurer's Office as a part-time file clerk shortly before graduating from Howard High School in 1972. She began working full-time, and after several promotions was eventually promoted to deputy treasurer. The late

former governor, Carroll Campbell, appointed Washington-Cooper to fill the county treasurer position until the next election after D.Z. McKenzie died while serving as such in 1989.

Washington-Cooper won every election since Gov. Campbell appointed her to serve as the county's interim treasurer 28 years ago.

● **Lt. Michelle Denise Gore King**, 53, died on May 21. The first female deputy hired by Georgetown County, she served the Sheriff's Office for more than 25 years. She was Supervisor of Judicial Operations.

● **James William "Bill" Nichols**, 74, a long-time Georgetown County council member, died on May 19. He became Georgetown County Sheriff's Office's first public information officer, and retired as such. He once owned and operated the WGTN and WAZX radio stations.

● Georgetown County held a ribbon cutting ceremony on May 9 for its new \$1 million Fleet Services maintenance facility on Highway 51. The 12,000 square foot facility, constructed by the county's Public Services Department, will be used to house, service and repair county vehicles and vehicles from several other agencies, including the Georgetown County Water and Sewer District. The building includes six work bays, a two-story office and

*(Continued on next page)*



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conference area, a parts room, tire mounting room and lubricant storage room. A 500 square foot wash down rack is located adjacent to the facility.

● Georgetown County recognized county employees at the 24th Backhoe Rodeo, an American Public Works Association competition held in Georgetown on May 25. Participating in the Backhoe Rodeo were operators from Georgetown County, Berkeley County, Charleston County, the City of Charleston and City of North Charleston.

**Kevin Brown** of Charleston County won first place for the second consecutive year. **Wade Wilder** of Georgetown County Parks and Recreation, won second place. **Harold West** of the Georgetown County Public Works Division won third place. Brown and Wilder will advance to the state competition later this year.

The county presented awards for outstanding job performance to **Sharon Moultrie**, **Matt Miele** and **Scott Walker**. Moultrie, who has worked in the Public Services department for 26 years, received the Leadership Award. Walker, who also works for the Public Services department, received the Green Earth Award for his efforts promoting environmental responsibility and sustainability. Miele, who works for the Public

Works Division, received the Team Player Award.

**Horry County**

● Horry County Auditor **Lois Eargle** was sworn into office on June 30 at the Horry County Government & Justice Center in Conway by S.C. Secretary of State Mark Hammond. Eargle is serving her seventh consecutive term.

● The Horry County Museum and the L.W. Living History Farm host a broad range of programs and events. For more information, visit the museum's website at [www.horrycountymuseum.org](http://www.horrycountymuseum.org) and the living history farm at [www.horrycountymuseum.org](http://www.horrycountymuseum.org)

● The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released its FY 2017 Work Plan in May that included \$16 million in funding for the Myrtle Beach Shore Protection Project. The funds will be used to complete renourishment in the City of Myrtle Beach. This is in addition to \$35 million in federal funds that has already been allocated to the Myrtle Beach Shore Protection Project for the City of North Myrtle Beach, the Town of Surfside Beach, and the Garden City sections of Horry and Georgetown Counties.

● The Myrtle Beach Shore Protection

Project was authorized for construction by the Water Resources Development Act. The project covers three reaches: Reach 1 (generally the City of North Myrtle Beach), Reach 2 (generally the City of Myrtle Beach), and Reach 3 (the Town of Surfside Beach, unincorporated Horry County south of Myrtle Beach State Park, and a small segment of Georgetown County). The project provides for periodic beach renourishment to provide shore protection to one of the nation's most popular tourist destinations (17.9 million visitors annually) and over \$3.5 billion in improved property. Beach renourishment is paid 65 percent by the federal government and 35 percent by the

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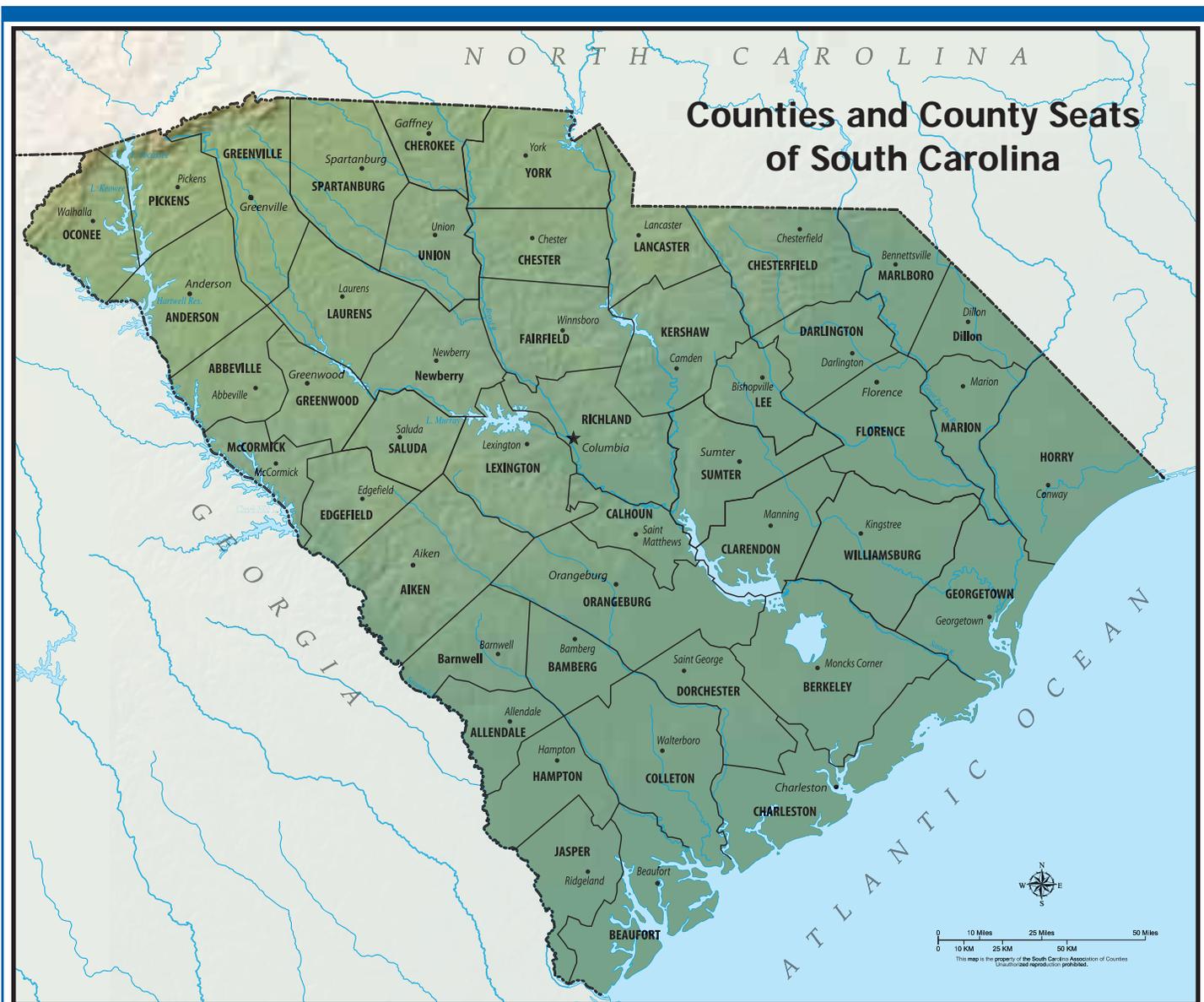
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state and local governments.

- The Horry County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) recently recognized Galivants Ferry area resident **Michael Davidson** as the “Caught Green Handed” recipient for the month of April. The Caught Green Handed recognition is presented monthly to a resident of Horry County caught in the act of recycling. Davidson regularly recycles at the Dog Bluff Recycling Center.

- The Horry County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) recently awarded 10 Environmental Scholarships to eligible high school seniors interested in protecting the environment. Each recipient received a \$1,000 scholarship after completing public education volunteering with SWA. Every year, SWA awards one eligible graduating high school senior from each high school in Horry County a one-time \$1,000 scholarship. Over the past 10 years, the SWA’s

program has awarded \$113,000 in scholarships.

- The Horry County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) recognized the 2017 Recycling Student

of the Year on May 5. **James Tres Thompkins**, a first grade student at Conway Elementary  
*(Continued on next page)*

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School, was honored for demonstrating a willingness to protect tomorrow's environment today through his tireless efforts to clean up in the community.

- The Horry County Board of Architectural Review & Historic Preservation held its annual Historic Preservation Awards ceremony on May 16 at the McCown Auditorium in the Horry County Museum in Conway. The ceremony showcased historic preservation efforts throughout Horry County during the last year. A presentation was also made on the S.C. Century Farm program.

The following were also recognized:

- **O'Neal Smalls** with Freewoods Farms for the education and preservation of the activities and practices of African-American farms.

- **Surfside Beach Historical Society** for telling the story of the Ark Plantation through Surfside Living History Day.

- **Hillary Howard** for years of historic preservation activities in Conway.

- **Tommy Simpson** for the renovation of an iconic Conway mural.

- **Graham Brothers Farm Supply** for the preservation of their historic feed mill.

- **Sallie and William Goldfinch** for the rehabilitation of their historic home.

- **Tammi and Alex Hyman** for the rehabilitation of their historic home.

Students for their participation in the annual High School Historic Sites & Structures Video Contest.

Businesses that have been honored by the Legacy Business Recognition Program.

Agritourism businesses that have received approved permits.

- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have upgraded Horry County to a Class 7 rating in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). Horry County was previously rated as a Class 9. CRS is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. The CRS program also recognizes a community's efforts to reduce flood risk, facilitates accurate insurance ratings, and promotes the awareness of flood insurance.

#### Lancaster County

- Lancaster County has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the county's annual financial report (CAFR). The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of

the U.S. and Canada presented the award in March. It's the highest recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting that a county and its management can achieve.

An entrant's CAFR is judged by an impartial panel to meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the CAFR. The GFOA, headquartered in Chicago, Ill., with offices in Washington, D.C., is a major professional association that services the needs of nearly 19,000 appointed and elected local, state and provincial-level government officials and other finance practitioners.

- Lancaster County Auditor **Cheryl Morgan**, who served Laurens County for 36 years, including 28 years as auditor, recently retired. **Susan Hunter Wall** was elected as the new auditor. ■



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