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SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
SUMMER 2022

How SCAC and South Carolina's Counties Are Using Social Media

**Clocking Out for Good: The Great Resignation's
Impact on Local Government**

**The Trickle-Down Effect: Why Counties Should Note
SEC's Proposed Rules on Climate-Related Disclosures**

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How SCAC and South Carolina's Counties Are Using Social Media

By W. Stuart Morgan III

Social media platforms have emerged in recent years, profoundly changing the way people share ideas and communicate. These new tools are challenging the role of traditional media—newspapers and magazines, television and radio, and recent digital versions of media outlets (online newspapers and blogs).

So, how are the South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC), and the state's counties using these new social media platforms, and how much sense does it make for SCAC and counties to use them?

Isn't social media just the newest fad?

First, social media definitely isn't just the newest fad!

SCAC uses Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. The association posts original content, shares curated content from reputable sources, and effectively engages with county social media platforms to help boost their engagement. More specifically, SCAC uses social media to:

- Enhance association communication/marketing efforts already in place,
- Foster a community of influencers to share SCAC content, and
- Share effectively with membership and the public what the SCAC does and why the association exists—to advance policy positions and promote the association as a community where local leaders come together to affect statewide change.

SCAC used Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn to launch its social media efforts in 2020. In 2021, the number of followers on the association's social media platforms grew by almost 400 individuals. Engagement on SCAC's platforms has also increased 10-fold!

Meanwhile, 27 of South Carolina's 46 counties (as of 2021) use social media. Twenty-one counties use Twitter, 23 counties use Facebook, and 18 counties use both. Some counties also use other social media platforms, including Instagram and YouTube.

You don't have to search long and hard to find a wealth of information on social media, the types of social platforms that are available, and the advantages and disadvantages of each. Just Google the subject



on the Internet.

For this article, links to two online sources—*Governing* and *CivicPlus*—provided a wealth of information on how social media platforms could be used by local government:

Governing

[governing.com/nw/how-social-media-is-elevating-engagement-for-local-government.html](https://www.governing.com/nw/how-social-media-is-elevating-engagement-for-local-government.html)

CivicPlus

[civicplus.com/blog/ce/the-truth-about-local-government-and-social-media](https://www.civicplus.com/blog/ce/the-truth-about-local-government-and-social-media)

[civicplus.com/blog/ce/seven-ways-local-government-can-use-social-media](https://www.civicplus.com/blog/ce/seven-ways-local-government-can-use-social-media)

Facebook and Twitter

There are many social media platforms. (See *Top 10 Social Media Platforms*, P. 3). But county PIOs, interviewed for this article, had more to say about Facebook and Twitter than any other platform.

You can't discuss Facebook, the most popular social media platform, without discussing Twitter, despite the fact that the latter

platform listed number 10 in *Search Engine Journal's* ranking of the most widely used social media platforms in May.

Twitter allows users to post and share short messages or “tweets” and add videos or photos. Twitter users or “tweeters” can follow other tweeters and share short messages with large audiences. Hashtags—#—are used in every tweet as in #GreenvilleCounty. These hashtags group Tweets and conversations around a similar topic, making it easier for users to follow topics of interest.

Users can pin top tweets, and customize notifications.

The Twitter platform has a highlight feature that allows users to receive updates on news, current conversations and top trends. The platform also allows users to produce photo collages that they can then add to their tweets.

Facebook, an older platform, allows users to upload photos and videos, and connect with family and an unlimited number of friends. This platform also allows you to add friends and communicate with them, comment on other posts, and do much more.

The platform makes it relatively easy for users to add different types of pages, to organize and prioritize contact lists, and follow numerous groups.

Instant Messenger, a component of Facebook, allows users to communicate with friends. A “like” button permits users to react to videos, photos, graphics and more.

Twitter and Facebook platforms have their pros and cons.

Twitter is a free platform. It is user-friendly, and enables businesses and organizations to quickly communicate, using one popular hashtag, with thousands of people in short messages or tweets (280 characters or fewer).

Facebook is another free platform. It is more effective for connecting people socially around the world, and communicating with family and friends, especially when using Instant Messenger. This platform allows businesses and organizations to promote goods and services, to engage and interact with the public, and to search for and add new contacts. Facebook is visually much more appealing than Twitter, and more suitable for photos, videos and graphics.

(Continued on next page)

Top 10 Social Media Platforms

1). Facebook	2.9 billion
2). YouTube	2.2 billion
3). WhatsApp	2 billion
4). Instagram	2 billion
5). TikTok	1 billion
6). Snapchat	538 million
7). Pinterest	444 million
8). Reddit	430 million
9). LinkedIn	250 million
10). Twitter	217 million

Number of monthly active users worldwide in May 2022, according to *Search Engine Journal (SEJ)*

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How County PIOs Use Social Media

Counties in South Carolina that have public information officers (PIOs) usually assign them the responsibility of maintaining the county's social media platforms.

So, all county PIOs were recently asked what they thought about social media, and how their counties were using social media platforms.

PIOs in Berkeley, Dorchester, Georgetown, Lexington, and York counties responded, and this is what they said:

Berkeley County

Berkeley County primarily uses Facebook and Instagram, but also uses YouTube to post videos and to livestream public meetings after they're held.

"Social media is a vital and helpful tool, and a key medium for our Public Information Office to disseminate information quickly and effectively to media outlets and the general public," said Jenna-Ley Jamison, Berkeley County PIO. "We use Facebook and Instagram to push out critical county-related information in a quick and clear manner. We've noticed over the years that Facebook is the best platform for our citizens."

Berkeley County's Public Information Office manages almost a dozen different social media pages, and uses Instagram primarily to reach members of the public who may check that platform more frequently than Facebook.



"We make sure that we post to Facebook at least once daily, sometimes more, and we always make sure to space out posts during the target times when our followers typically visit our pages," Jamison explained. "Each post contains a visual element, an informational video and/or graphic."

"We use Instagram and Facebook to engage with citizens and seek out their concerns, promote positive news about our employees, post information on upcoming county events and more," she added. "We also post informational videos created by the county, post county job openings, conduct polls and surveys, direct the public to our county's website and answer questions. Routinely, our PIO office uses Facebook Messenger as another way to correspond with citizens and communicate quickly with concerned citizens."

Berkeley County residents are more informed about upcoming county events and county news, including positive county news, due to the county's social media efforts, according to Jamison. They are also more informed on quality of life issues like where to receive COVID vaccines and boosters, and where to fill up sandbags prior to a hurricane, recycling/trash service schedules, 911 outages, polling locations, and much more.

"We post information to spotlight our county and its employees, and to let the public know what we're doing to provide better services for them and to improve their lives," Jamison said. "We also explain how we're making the best use of their taxes to benefit them by describing road projects and economic development projects underway, and then identifying

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companies that are creating jobs.”

Dorchester County

Dorchester County uses Facebook and Twitter, but also LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and NextDoor.

“We use both Twitter and Facebook to highlight departments, county staff members, promote programs and events, educate the public, and to provide safety or important updates on boil water advisories, weather, road conditions, etc.,” said Michelle A. Mills, Dorchester County PIO. “Using both social media platforms, our reach into the communities within Dorchester County has grown. Information can be shared much more quickly, and engagement with our citizens has increased. The other two social media platforms, NextDoor and LinkedIn, have also helped.”

Dorchester County actually has two Facebook accounts—one for the county, and one for its Do More Dorchester campaign.

Many departments within the county, including the following, also have their own social media accounts: Parks uses Facebook; Emergency Management uses Facebook and Twitter; Fire Rescue uses Facebook and Instagram; EMS uses Facebook; Sheriff’s Office uses Facebook and Twitter; and Economic Development uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

“What’s interesting is that Fire Rescue’s social media has more male followers, while the county’s social media has more female fol-

lowers,” Mills noted. “In cases when it’s imperative to get accurate and time sensitive information out to the public, it’s helpful that our departments can share posts with their respective audiences.”

Georgetown County

Georgetown County uses Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, but also LinkedIn and Instagram.

“Most of our audience uses Facebook, which is one of the tools in our toolbox for reaching out to our residents and visitors—particularly those who have not signed up to receive alerts from our website,” said Jackie R. Broach, Georgetown County PIO. “We use social media to encourage people to utilize our website at gtcounty.org and to sign up for alerts, our monthly e-newsletter, *The Georgetown County Chronicle*, and other features available on our website.

“Using social media is an easy way to reach people,” she added.

“We post everything, from links to our live-streamed county meetings to public notices, employee recognitions, events, news releases, programs—basically everything. Because each social media platform and user base is different, we often tailor messages differently from one platform to another, or for example, not post everything on LinkedIn or Instagram that we post on Facebook.”

Broach noted that Georgetown County is using social media

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platforms to reach people who can't be reached other ways.

"Even if people don't follow our county, the algorithms in the social media platforms can put our county messages in their personal social media feeds if their friends like or share posts," she explained.

"We use social media to encourage people to utilize our website at gtcounty.org and to sign up for alerts, our monthly e-newsletter, *The Georgetown Chronicle*, and other features available on our website. Using social media is an easy way to reach people. We post everything, ... basically everything."

Jackie R. Broach,
Georgetown County Public Information Officer

"Facebook now has an alerts feature that lets governments, in certain circumstances, send out emergency notifications to social media followers. So, this social media platform or tool can also be a great avenue for two-way communication.

"During many of our county emergency operation center activations," she added, "Facebook was the primary tool local residents used to reach out to us and ask questions. Residents also used our posts to control rumors during recent hurricane events."

Lexington County

Lexington County uses Facebook, NextDoor, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The county's Fire Service, and Department of Emergency Medical Services use separate Instagram accounts, set up so posts on each account show on the county's Facebook and Twitter pages.

"The county uses Facebook to send out information to our followers about a multitude of different things," said Jessica Imbimbo, Lexington County PIO. "We send out public service announcements, information about events going on within different county departments, bulletins about voting, breaking news alerts, etc. We also use Facebook as a way to interact with our municipalities as well as our county residents. I'd say that Facebook is the main social media platform we use to send information out to our community. We also use Twitter to send out similar information."

Last year, Imbimbo prioritized building a following on Lexington County's social media platforms. In fewer than 12 months, she was able to add more than 1,000 followers.

"By growing our followings on social media," she said, "we are able to reach our residents with important information.

"As a government entity and a public service," Imbimbo added, "I believe it is our duty to keep people informed as much as possible about what is going on in their local government as our decisions directly affect their lives. I hope everyone living in Lexington County, who has a Facebook account, will look to follow us and see us as a direct, trustworthy, credible source of information that helps the people of Lexington County stay informed on what is happening in their communities."

York County

York County uses Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Nextdoor.

"We use Twitter to post short announcements of events, such as council meetings, including links to agendas; reminders about closings, holiday events, job listings, weather updates and alerts, and road issues, traffic, etc.," said Greg Suskin, York County PIO. "I also retweet posts from the Sheriff's Office that have a major impact, and posts from cities containing information that's important to county residents.

"Facebook is more complex," he added. "I'll do all of the above on Facebook, too, but that's also where we post all the videos we shoot. Everything from a 10 second promo of an event, to a three-to-four minute story on a county issue or service. Instagram is kind of a mixed blessing, but we're leaning toward posting shorter, more direct content instead."

Suskin noted that the local media follow York County's social media platforms.

"Even though I do send out news releases, I find that Twitter is good for brief notices that don't require much detail," he explained. "I include links to give more information when needed. Facebook really helps us get our message out. Not only is Facebook by far the largest platform we have, and one that's growing quickly, this platform allows for a broad range of deeper content, and interaction with residents. I answer questions, respond to criticism, and connect personally with followers on Facebook. I can also send their comments/questions to department heads who can better answer some of the more specific ones. This type of connection isn't easy on other platforms."

York County, like many other counties in South Carolina, has a website that has a significant number of users.

"It's nice to have a county website," Suskin said, "but our website focuses on county services like paying bills, tax information, and finding certain departments. With social media, we can reach an audience that would never visit our website, and start conversations as well about what local government does."



The Newest Communications Tools

Desktop publishing revolutionized the printing industry when introduced in the mid-1980s. Websites then emerged in the early 1990s, years after the birth of the Internet, to provide an alternative to printed media.

Now, social media platforms are the newest communication tools.

According to the Pew Research Center on Dec. 10, 2018, social media has surpassed the printed media as a news source. Television is still ranked as the most popular platform for news, and news websites are still considered the next most common source for news. In fact, both radio and social media sites, as news sources, now surpass printed media!

Many articles have been published in recent years on social media versus traditional media, and the argument over the pros and cons of each media category will continue.

Bailey Roy posted a piece on Apr. 1, 2016, in the April edition of *Public Relations Tactics* that explained the silliness of the "digital/



Social Media Platform Addresses for ...

Berkeley County

Facebook: facebook.com/BerkeleySCGov

Instagram: instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/berkeleyscgov/

YouTube: youtube.com/user/berkeleycountygov

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/berkeley-county-government

Dorchester County

Facebook: facebook.com/DorchesterSCGov/

Twitter: twitter.com/DorchesterSCGov

Instagram: instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/visitdorchester/

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/dorchesterscgv

Nextdoor: nextdoor.com/agency-detail/sc/dorchester/dorchester-county/?i=hnycznfstlfbqcfrcqpy

Georgetown County

Facebook: facebook.com/GtCounty/

Twitter: twitter.com/gtcounty

YouTube: youtube.com/gtcountysc

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/gtcounty/

Instagram: instagram.com/gtcounty/

Lexington County

Facebook: facebook.com/CountyofLexington

Nextdoor: nextdoor.com/agency-city/sc/lexington-county/

Twitter: twitter.com/CountyLex

Instagram (Fire Service): instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/lexcofiresc/

Instagram (Department of Emergency Medical Services): lex-co.sc.gov/departments/public-safety/emergency-medical-services

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/county-of-lexington

York County

Twitter: twitter.com/YorkCountySCgov

Facebook: facebook.com/YorkCountySc

Instagram: instagram.com/accounts/login/?next=/visityorkcountysc/

LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/york-county-south-carolina

Nextdoor: nextdoor.com/agency-detail/sc/york-county/york-county-government/?is=detail_author

new media” (social media platforms) versus analog/traditional media argument.

He also identified the major differences between the two media categories:

1. Social media reaches a maximum audience, while traditional media’s audience is generally more targeted.
2. Social media is versatile (you can make changes once published), whereas traditional media, once published, is set in stone.
3. Social media is immediate, while traditional can be delayed due to press times.
4. Social media is a two-way conversation, and traditional is one-way.
5. Social media often has unreliable demographic data, but traditional media’s is more accurate.

Peter M. Smudde, Ph.D., APR, responding to Roy’s article in the comments section immediately beneath his article on Apr. 13, 2016, then explained how social media platforms and traditional media should be used:

“It’s about ethically and strategically taking advantage of the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of any media combination that makes the most sense—in the service of establishing cooperation between organizations and their publics.”

So far, SCAC has found that social media platforms are effective tools for reaching county officials, county employees, members of the S.C. General Assembly, and the general public on legislative issues.


The association has also found that such platforms are effective tools for highlighting award winning county programs, and boosting

“It’s about ethically and strategically taking advantage of the strengths and minimizing the weaknesses of any media combination that makes the most sense—in the service of establishing cooperation between organizations and their publics.”

—Peter M. Smudde, Ph.D., APR, commenting on an article posted on Apr. 1, 2016, by Bailey Roy in the April edition of *Public Relations Tactics*

the signal for South Carolina counties, as well as for organizations like NACo and Government Finance Officers Association.

All county PIOs, interviewed for this article, noted the benefits of using social social media platforms. But Jackie Broach, Georgetown County’s PIO, probably best explained how social media platforms can help counties:

“For a social media manager who is trained and willing to take the time to use the platforms appropriately, social media can go a long way in building an agency’s brand, building relationships with residents, and spreading important messages.” 

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Clocking Out for Good: the Great Resignation's Impact on Local Government

By Jessie O'Brien

Article reprinted with permission from the National Research Center at Polco

Over 38 million workers left their jobs in 2020, and the quit rate continued into 2021. More than 4.5 million Americans left their positions in November, an all-time high. The employee-employer dynamic shift affects every industry. But The Great Resignation's impact on local government creates unique issues. It has many rethinking how they operate.

Allyson Brunette is one of the many who put in her two weeks' notice after nine years in local government. Pandemic-related staff shortages led to burnout that crept into her home life. She stopped doing all the things she liked—cooking, walking the dog, sleeping, and being, you know, hydrated.

"Even though I know I should stop mainlining coffee and have a glass of water, am I doing it? No," she said. Caffeine became essential to keeping up with an extraordinary workload at an extraordinary pace. The work itself didn't change, but the volume did. "It was affecting more than my 9-to-5. It was my whole 24 hours," she said. Eventually, Brunette left for good.

Fields feeling the most pressure from the pandemic, like hospital-ity, retail, and healthcare, are seeing a drastic decline in workers. But people are leaving the workforce across the board. In local government, job applications dropped off an alarming 32 percent over the past two years, reports Route Fifty. And according to the Rockefeller Institute, quit rates nearly doubled from 2010 to 2020.

Why Workers Are Leaving Local Government

Benchmark data from National Research Center at Polco gives insights as to why. The National Employee Survey (The NES) measures the local government workplace based on employee opinions. This

nationwide database shows what matters most to job satisfaction.

Survey results point to work-life balance, morale, and fair compensation for why people are quitting in local government.

According to The NES, a meager 39 percent of respondents believe they are fairly compensated for their level of performance. Only 55 percent feel appreciated for their work. And while 65 percent report positive staff morale, this means 35 percent reported fair or poor ratings. Addressing these areas could help prevent burnout.

Unfortunately, local governments don't have the same agility as private businesses to curb dissatisfaction. "Unlike the private sector where you can modify the work you take on to fit your team, the work isn't optional in local government," Brunette said. "It's either there, or it's not. There is a baseline level of services that you need to provide your residents, regardless of what your staffing levels look like."

Former city manager and CEO of local government executive recruitment firm SGR, Ron Holifield, has been busy. He and his team are working to fill a record-level of 100 positions due to a convergence of issues.

In local government, Holifield said the staffing gaps come from the spike of boomers who traded in their loafers for pickleball sneakers and finally retired. COVID-19 and partisan politics exacerbated the issue.

"They are tired of the political abuse, and they are tired of hatefulness among citizens," Holifield said. "We've basically been in fight-or-flight mode since the pandemic began, and so it's just wearying."

Holifield describes many government workers as people who "want off the treadmill, but they don't want to quit." Some employees, especially parents, are making backward moves for a lighter workload.



Number two positions are unwilling or underprepared to take on more demanding roles, leaving more vacancies in upper management than a seedy roadside motel.

In a recent *Politico* interview, White House Labor Secretary Marty Walsh said, “Everyone talks about the Great Resignation, and I think what we’ve seen there is not necessarily resigning from work but resigning from their jobs—a job that was not fulfilling enough for folks.”

People are seeking more enrichment, more family time, or are taking the chance on entrepreneurship. That’s what Brunette did. She started her own government consulting company and can now walk her dog any time she wants.

“If the pandemic has taught us nothing else, it’s that life expectancy is not a guarantee. I don’t want to live for 65. I want to squeak some joy out of it in my 30s,” she said.

Today, local governments need to fill 928,000 jobs, reports the Rockefeller Institute. And there are more than 10.9 million job openings total, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics.

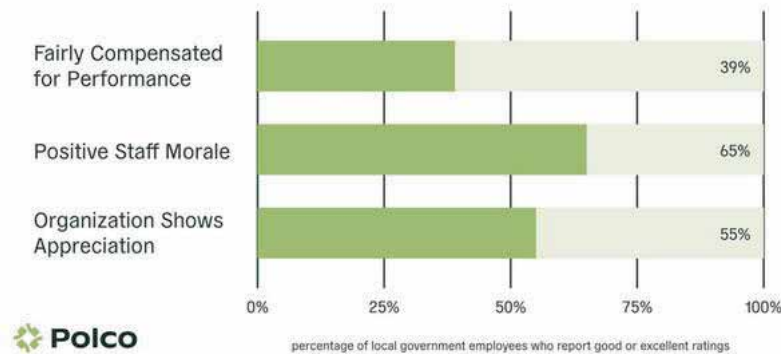
The Great Resignation gave private-sector employees leverage to ask for flexibility, better benefits, higher pay, and remote work. But some of these changes are at odds with how many governments

typically operate. The optics of government employees staying home may look bad to the public eye. That’s why so few municipalities have embraced remote work. But Holifield and Brunette disagree with the resistance to new normals.

“Local governments that are not willing to change how they think or get outside of the box are going to have an increasingly difficult time recruiting,” Holifield said. “Because the best and the brightest are just saying, ‘No I am not willing to work the way my father did or my mother did. I am going to have a balanced life.’”

Indicators for Staff Retention in Local Government

Data from Polco's The National Employee Survey™



Surviving Local Government Staff Shortages

Government positions possess a valuable quality: a meaningful job experience. Eighty-four percent of The NES respondents feel posi-

(Continued on next page)

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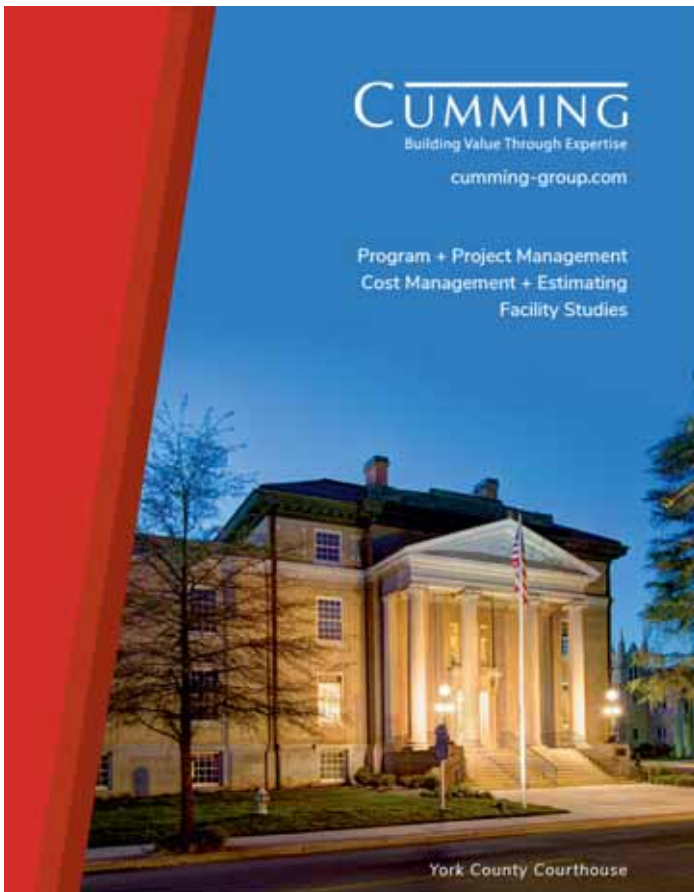
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tive about working for local government, and 86 percent said their values align with their work.

But meaning isn't enough with all the stress that comes along with government careers. Brunette and Holifield say local governments need to embrace change if they want to retain high-performing staff members and survive the Great Resignation. "The whole system that has been based on longevity—accruing benefits over time—has been thrown out the window," Brunette said. It's one reason why Holifield predicts flex scheduling and benefits are on the horizon.

Flexible scheduling is exactly what it sounds like, a life without a rigid time clock. "Flex benefits" refers to different job perks for people at different phases in their life. For instance, parental leave isn't useful for empty nesters. But time off to take care of an aging parent is valuable.

Holifield also predicts there will be more contract work, job sharing positions, and other creative solutions. Job sharing allows two or more people to tackle the same position so they can work fewer hours. Parents with kids can continue to work and take on a carpooling shift.

Brunette points out that local governments may be able to fish from a bigger hiring pond if they embrace remote work. Rush hour isn't so bad for staff who are not required to commute every day.

Beyond reshaping the job itself, Holifield strongly suggests local governments change the descriptions on their job postings to create more latitude. "If you say 'must have' [on a job posting], you're putting artificial barriers in place, and you're gonna shrink the pool even further," he said.

(See *Clocking Out*, P. 14)



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Clocking Out ... (Continued from P. 12)

How Data Can Help Employers Retain Local Government Staff

“Having a data-driven approach to identifying problems, and understanding what’s important to folks, is valuable so you can increase that engagement before issues arise,” said co-creator of The NES and Polco’s vice president of innovation, Michelle Kobayashi.

She’s helped local governments leverage public and employee opinion for more than 30 years. “Being preemptive instead of reactive is always better,” she said.

To successfully improve retention, local government employers must first quantify the problems turnover causes. They must then find the source of the issue and develop a tailored retention strategy.


Employee surveys like The NES are effective in collecting the necessary data to create an informed plan. The survey unveils employees’ feelings toward their job—the good and the bad.

“Some people will not do employee surveys because they are so afraid of results. But just because you don’t measure dissatisfaction, doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist,” Kobayashi said.

Kobayashi said governments often see surveys as an excuse for employees to complain or ask for more money. But they may be missing the point when money isn’t the main driver behind job satisfaction in local government.

“I’ve found compensation is important, but often there are a lot of other levers that organizations can pull to increase employee engagement that doesn’t rely on compensation,” Kobayashi said.

Those levers include adjusting job descriptions and allowing more overall flexibility with benefits, hours, and remote work. And considering how many government employees feel underappreciated, a little recognition could go a long way.

The NES reveals what stressors impact employees the most, so managers can find and prioritize the best solutions. The survey results can be key to helping retain and attract skilled employees. 



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A map of South Carolina with its county boundaries highlighted in light blue. A white rounded rectangle is overlaid on the map, containing the hashtag #WeKnowCounties in a bold, dark blue font.

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NEW OPPORTUNITIES ...

The South Carolina Association of Counties (SCAC) offers a NEW way to market your company—both efficiently and cost-effectively—to South Carolina's 46 counties! SCAC's Corporate Partner Program provides a comprehensive marketing opportunity to showcase products and services directly to county leaders. The program also offers year-round exposure to county officials and employees at multiple SCAC events, and opportunities to advertise in the Association's quarterly magazine and annual directory. It is never too late to join the 40 other companies that made the investment during the inaugural year, 2021.

ACCESS ...

If you are looking for ways to build and strengthen relationships with county governments, this new program is for you. As an SCAC Corporate Partner, you will be able to maintain contact with county officials throughout the year. You will also be updated on trends in county government and legislative initiatives.

COST EFFECTIVE ...

This "one stop shop" approach will minimize costs and make it easier for you to budget because you will be able to support the SCAC as a partner at one of the levels for an entire calendar year. Still, "a la carte" options will remain available if you choose to advertise in SCAC's publications.

BENEFITS OVERVIEW ...

- Four levels of partnership — \$1,500, \$3,000, \$5,000, or \$10,000
- Complimentary/discounted rates to attend (including premier exposure) three SCAC events — Mid-Year Conference in February, Annual Conference in August, and County Council Coalition Fall Meeting in October. In addition, all Partners will be recognized during all three events, whether virtual or in-person.
- Advertising in *County Focus Magazine* and annual *Directory of County Officials* will be included in the top three levels and discounted advertising may be purchased at the Bronze Level.
- Complimentary/discounted rates to attend and exhibit at SCAC's Annual Conference available to partners only.
- Complimentary promotion on SCAC's website and Annual Conference app.
- Exclusive benefits and exposure at the top levels.
- Complimentary subscription(s) to *County Focus Magazine* and copies of the annual *Directory of County Officials*.
- Benefits will be available on a calendar year basis, and
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To learn more about SCAC's Corporate Partner Program, please visit:

SCCounties.org/corporate-partner-program

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For more information regarding SCAC's Corporate Partner Program, please visit sccounties.org/corporate-partner-program or contact Tish Anderson at tanderson@scac.sc. Participation as an SCAC Corporate Partner shall not imply, nor be considered or presented as, an endorsement by SCAC of any service or product provided by the company.



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COUNTY JOB POSTINGS

SCAC'S PURPOSE

- To promote more efficient county governments;
- To study, discuss, and recommend improvements in government;
- To investigate and provide a 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; and
- To promote legislation that supports efficient administration of local government in South Carolina.

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- ✓ **Advocacy**
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What is the SCAC?

Local Leaders. Statewide Strength.®



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 S.C. General Assembly 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, conducts the Institute of Government for County Officials (Level I, Level II, and Advanced levels). Clemson University's Master of Public Administration program is a sponsor of the Institute.

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 webinars on a variety of topics for county officials and employees throughout the year at no charge to counties. Recordings of the webinars are made available in the Association's online educational library via SCCounties.org/webcasts-and-webinars.

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; 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 curiae* 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, innovations, 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:
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.



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SCAC-Sponsored Insurance Trusts



History of the Trusts

The S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust (SCCWCT) was formed in 1984 with only 11 counties. Today, the membership consists of 41 of South Carolina's 46 counties and an additional 47 county-related entities. SCCWCT is approved as a self-insured trust by the S.C. Workers' Compensation Commission in accordance with South Carolina statutes. It provides statutory workers' compensation coverage for its members.

The S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust (SCCP<) was formed in 1995 due largely to the success of the Workers' Compensation Trust. SCCP< started with only four members and now has 24 members, including 16 counties.

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 of Trustees 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

SCAC's staff administers the S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust.

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and
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Law Enforcement Defensive and Distracted Driver Program

By Robert Benfield, ARM, AINS
SCAC Director of Insurance Services

Motor vehicle accidents (MVAs), a leading cause of officer deaths, are impacting officers' lives and the budgets of Sheriff's Offices across South Carolina. Motor vehicle accidents account for more than 20 percent of the law enforcement claims in the S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and 80 percent of the law enforcement claims in the S.C. Property and Liability Trust.

The prevention of motor vehicle accidents is a top priority for SCAC Risk Managers. Preventing a motor vehicle accident can eliminate three types of claims—workers' compensation, auto liability, and auto property damage.

To help mitigate this exposure, we partnered with Safety National, County Reinsurance Limited, OSS Training Academy, and Willis Watson Towers to create a pilot Law Enforcement Defensive & Distracted Driver Program. The program included classroom and five hours of hands-on driver training at the Michelin Laurens Proving Grounds in Laurens County on May 3rd and May 5th. The May 3rd class was tailored for sheriffs/chiefs and command staffs, and the May 5th class was "a train the trainer class," geared for training officers, which also included an online eLearning segment.

The goal of the program was to reduce officer deaths, vehicle collisions, time away from the job, impacts on budgets, and to improve



Dr. David Salmon, OSS Academy -Law Enforcement, Corrections & Telecommunications Training, teaches a class at the pilot Law Enforcement Defensive and Distracted Driver Program, held on May 3 and 5 at the Michelin Laurens Proving Grounds in Laurens County.

overall officer safety. We had great turnout for the training with 35 officers representing 17 South Carolina counties participating. All participants were provided with a thumb drive containing training
(See *Law Enforcement*, P. 28)



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Law Enforcement... (Continued from P. 27)

materials, PowerPoints, and instructions on how to set up the training courses in their county.

Due to the success of the program, we will be conducting two more days of training on September 13 and 15, 2022, at the Michelin Laurens Proving Grounds.

Another critical element in reducing MVAs is the implementation of a vehicle accident review board with sanctions. The purpose of this board is to review all employee motor vehicle accidents to determine if the accident could have been prevented and if the employee's actions contributed to the accident.

Not all accidents can be prevented, but many accidents occur due to distractions, driving too fast for conditions, and poor driving habits. It is vital that employees be held accountable for preventable motor vehicle accidents.

We have created a model Vehicle Accident Mitigation Program (VAMP) to help our members reduce MVAs. The core elements of this program address issues ranging from pre-hire driver records checks to the implementation of vehicle accident review boards with sanctions. If you would like a copy of this program, please email Van Henson, Director of Risk Management Services, at Vhenson@scac.sc. 



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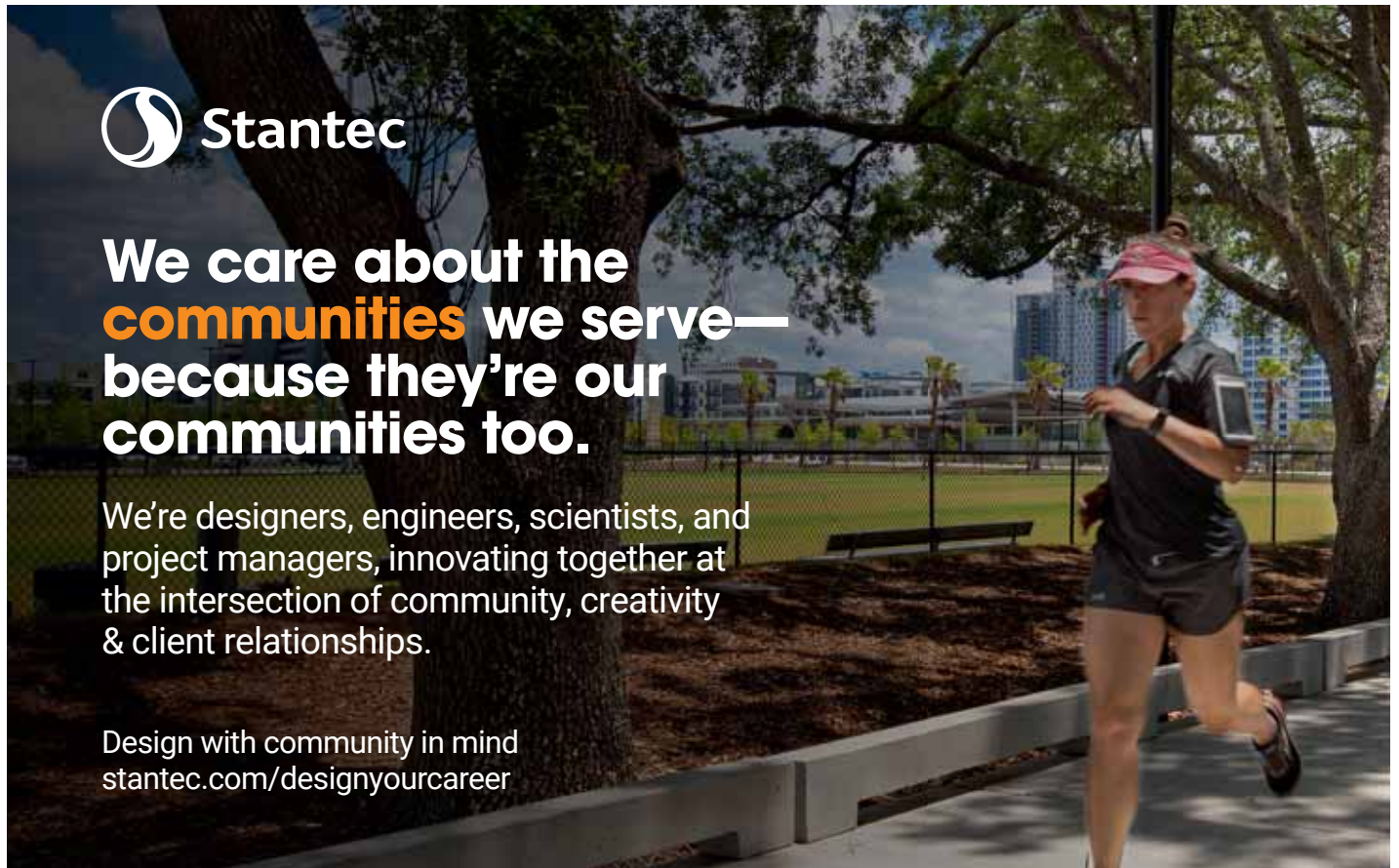
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The Trickle-Down Effect: Why Counties Should Note SEC's Proposed Rules on Climate-Related Disclosures

By Ray E. Jones, Partner, and Ryan T. Romano, Associate
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On March 21, 2022, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) released a proposed amendment to its rules under the Securities Act of 1933 and Securities Exchange Act of 1934 that would require heightened disclosure of certain climate-related risk information by public companies.

The SEC has broad power to issue disclosure requirements that are in the public interest or are for the protection of investors. Relying on this authority, the SEC determined that climate-related risks and their potential impacts on financial performance or strategic position may be material to investors in making investment decisions. In its proposal, the SEC expressed concern that the existing rules governing the disclosure of climate-related risks do not adequately protect investors.

Although the proposed rules do not currently apply to municipal issuers (e.g., counties and municipalities), this shift by the SEC deserves our attention. History shows that disclosure requirements applicable to public companies can often “trickle-down” to municipal issuers.

There's recent evidence of the trickle-down effect. Since roughly 2012, the SEC has increased efforts to ensure that the buyers of governmental debt have similar protection against false or misleading statements as that provided to buyers of corporate debt. In pursuing this objective, the SEC has often taken concepts that at first apply to corporate issuers and later apply them to municipal issuers. The results have included increased SEC enforcement actions against municipal issuers and, in some cases, have involved personal liability for governmental officials.ⁱ

Increased Investor Concern

The SEC's proposed rules come in response to calls from the investment community. Investors have placed an increased emphasis on information regarding the economic risks associated with climate change. The SEC reported that several major institutional investors have demanded climate-related information before making investments because they view climate change as a risk to their portfolios. Potential risks may include the financial impacts of acute climate-related disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and heatwaves.ⁱⁱ



There may also be longer-term and more gradual impacts from global warming, drought, and sea level rise. Investors are also concerned about the economic impacts of a transition to a less carbon-intensive economy.ⁱⁱⁱ These risks may arise from potential adoption of climate-related regulatory policies or shifts in the international political climate.^{iv}

SEC Proposed Rules

The proposed rules would require information about a public company's climate-related risks that are reasonably likely to have a material impact on its business, results of operations, or financial condition.^v The SEC and the U.S. Supreme Court view a matter as material if there is a substantial likelihood that a reasonable investor would consider it important when determining whether to buy or sell securities.^{vi}

When considering a future event, the materiality determination requires an assessment of both the probability of the event occurring and its potential magnitude, or significance if it does indeed occur.^{vii}

Specifically, the proposed rules would require a public company to disclose information about:

- The oversight and governance of climate-related risks by the board and management;

- How any climate-related risks identified have had, or are likely to have, a material impact on its business and consolidated financial statements;
- How any identified climate-related risks have affected or are likely to affect strategy, business model, and outlook;
- The processes for identifying, assessing, and managing climate-related risks and whether any such processes are integrated into the overall risk management system or processes;
- The impact of climate-related events (severe weather events and other natural conditions as well as physical risks identified by the public company) on the line items of consolidated financial statements and related expenditures;
- Whether the risk is likely to manifest over the short, medium, or long term;^{viii}
- Greenhouse gas emissions and intensity, if material, or a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target; and
- Climate-related targets or goals, and plan to transition to alternative energy, if any.^{ix}

Takeaways for Local Governments

To be clear, these proposed rules, if adopted, would not directly apply to municipal issuers. However, there is already evidence that investors expect municipal issuers, particularly those located in

geographic areas subject to significant weather events, to provide disclosure on climate-related risks.

Clearly, investors view these types of disclosures as being material to their investment decisions. In view of the proposed rules, it would be prudent for municipal issuers to closely examine the impact of climate change on their operations and be prepared to describe the risks and their responses to the investment community.

A municipal issuer should consult with its counsel before concluding which climate-related risks, if any, need to be disclosed. For more information refer to The Enhancement and Standardization of Climate-Related Disclosures for Investors, SEC Release Nos. 33-11042; 34-94478; File No. S7-10-22.

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ⁱSee e.g. *Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. Town of Oyster Bay, et al.*, 17-Cv-06809 (E.D.N.Y.), Litigation Release No. 24494 (June 7, 2019); *In Re City of Miami, Fla.*, Release No. 8213 (Mar. 21, 2003); *Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. Town of Ramapo, et al.*, No. 16-Cv-2779 (S.D.N.Y. Filed Apr. 14, 2016), Litigation Release No. 24161 (June 8, 2018); *Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. City of Harvey, Illinois & Joseph T. Letke*, United States Dist. Ct. for the N. Dist. of Illinois, Civ. Action No. 1:14-Cv-4744 (N.D. Ill., Filed June 24, 2014), Litigation Release No. 23180 (Jan. 27, 2015); *Sec. & Exch. Comm'n v. Gary J. Burtka*, Civ. Action No. Civ. Action No. 14-Cv-14278 (Cohn) (E.D. Mi) *Sec. & Exch. Comm'n*, Litigation Release No. 23229 (Apr. 6, 2015); *In the Matter of the City of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Respondent.*, Release No. 69515 (May 6, 2013); *Sec Initiates Actions in Orange Cnty. Investigation* Sa Cv 96-0074, Litigation Release No. 14792 (Jan. 24, 1996).

ⁱⁱSee proposed 17 CFR 229.1500.

ⁱⁱⁱ*Id.*

^{iv}See proposed 17 CFR 229.1502(a).

^vSee proposed 17 CFR 229.1501, 1502, 1503.

^{vi}See 17 CFR 240.12b-2 (definition of “material”). See also *Basic Inc. v. Levinson*, 485 U.S. 224, 231, 232, and 240 (1988) (holding that information is material if there is a substantial likelihood that a reasonable investor would consider the information important in deciding how to vote or make an investment decision; and quoting *TSC Industries, Inc. v. Northway, Inc.*, 426 U.S. 438, 449 (1977) to further explain that an omitted fact is material if there is “a substantial likelihood that the disclosure of the omitted fact would have been viewed by the reasonable investor as having significantly altered the ‘total mix’ of information made available.”).

^{vii}See *Basic, Inc. v. Levinson*, 485 U.S. 224, 238 (1988).

^{viii}See proposed Item 1502(a) of Regulation S-K.

^{ix}See proposed 17 CFR 229.1501, 1502, 1503, 1504.

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A Roadside Guide to Georgetown County

The County's Role in the American War for Independence

By Alexia Jones Helsley
www.historyismybag.com

Georgetown County has a long and fascinating history. The county's name honors George III, one of the Hanoverian kings of England. The county borders Winyah Bay and numerous streams and rivers traverse the area.

The county seat, Georgetown, was the colony's third port city. Georgetown had a prominent role in the struggle for American independence.

Prior to the Revolution, naval stores and the cultivation of indigo and later rice fueled the Georgetown economy. Thomas Lynch, Sr., and Thomas Lynch, Jr., of Hopsewee were delegates to the Continental Congress. The younger Lynch signed the Declaration of Independence. Thomas, Sr., suffered a stroke in early 1776, and was unable to sign. The elder Lynch suffered another stroke enroute home and was buried in Annapolis, Maryland.

In April 1777, Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, at his own expense and in violation of French policy, sailed to join the fight for American independence. In June, Lafayette landed near Georgetown. Before traveling to Philadelphia, the dashing young Frenchman met and visited with Major Benjamin Huger. Later, Lafayette joined the staff of General George Washington.

Between 1770 and 1782, many battles and skirmishes occurred on land, in Winyah Bay and off the coast of Georgetown County. At one point, following the surrender of Charlestown, the British, understanding its strategic importance, occupied the town of Georgetown, July 1780 – May 1781.

The following battles and skirmishes suggest the extent and complexity of the Revolution in Georgetown County:

Coast of Georgetown, November 1777

Off the coast of Georgetown, Captain John Rathbun and the crew of the *Providence*, a ship of the Continental Navy, captured a British privateer in November 1777. Rathbun brought the captured vessel into Georgetown harbor. The *Providence* patrolled the coast of Georgetown throughout the winter of 1777-1778.

Georgetown, Feb. 21, 1779, and March 6, 1779

Under the command of Captain Paul Trapier, Patriots from Lower Fort captured men from a British privateer. The privateer crew came ashore to salvage a grounded Patriot vessel. In March, Trapier and his artillery again seized a British landing party trying to capture ships in



Georgetown harbor.



Santee River, June 21, 1779

On this date, Patriot militia prevented two British privateers from raiding Patriot properties along the Santee River. The militia captured one ship and crew, as well as slaves taken from plantations in the area. The other ship escaped.

Occupation of Georgetown, July 1, 1780

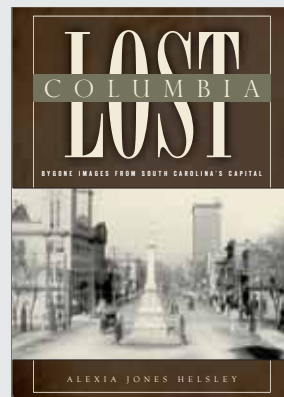
The British occupation of Georgetown began on July 1, 1780. Vice-Admiral Mariot Arbuthnot and Captain John Plumer Ardesoif entered Georgetown Harbor and dispatched armed men and vessels to raid Patriot possessions in the area. Such raids were retaliatory and part of the British strategy to suppress dissent in the state.

Arbuthnot and Ardesoif then read aloud two recent proclamations.
(Continued on next page)

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tions issued by General Sir Henry Clinton. Clinton's proclamations stated that all South Carolina residents must join the British and fight against their rebelling countrymen. To some, these proclamations violated the earlier terms of parole given Patriots after the surrender of Charlestown. At that time, those who accepted British parole, promised not to continue the fight against the British but were not required to take up arms against their neighbors. The new British terms stated that pardon was conditional upon military service. Some, such as Major John James of the Kingstree Regiment, refused to serve.

On July 11, Major James Wemyss and the 63rd Regiment entered the town. The British now controlled the valuable port city and its busy harbor. During the ensuing months, Wemyss earned a certain notoriety for his raids against Patriot homes and settlements, and his attacks on meeting houses.

Nevertheless, on July 14, the British had grounds for hope. On that day, Wemyss forwarded to Lt. General Charles, Lord Cornwallis a petition from several residents asking to become British subjects because Clinton and Arbuthnot's proclamations had guaranteed they would not be taxed without representation. If the British accepted their petition, the petitioners promised to be loyal subjects. As a result, the petitioners sat out the remaining years of the Revolution in South Carolina.

Pee Dee Swamp, September 1780

This serendipitous engagement in September 1780 involved Captain Gavin Witherspoon and a small group of Loyalists. While on patrol in the Pee Dee Swamp, Witherspoon and four others accidentally found a Loyalist camp. Witherspoon entered the camp, found

the men asleep, and secured their weapons before awakening them. All of the surprised men surrendered.

White's Plantation, November 1780

In the winter of 1780, Francis Marion and his partisans desperately needed such critical supplies as salt and ammunition. Consequently, Georgetown became a likely target. For Marion, the port could supply all his needs and its capture would boost the Patriot cause.

Preparatory to such an attack, Marion gathered his forces and traveled to the White's Bay, a swampy area on the Black River. There, he dispatched two scouting missions: Lt. Colonel Peter Horry to the Black River and Captain John Melton and Captain John Milton of Georgia to the Sampit Road.

Horry encountered Captain James Lewis and a cohort of Loyalists slaughtering beef outside of Georgetown. The troops clashed near White's Plantation. The Patriots prevailed but with casualties and Lewis, the Loyalist leader, died. Marion later noted that Captain Jesse Barefield [Barfield], another Loyalist leader, was also wounded. According to Marion, the Loyalist contingent around Georgetown had about 200 men, more than he expected.

Marion spent several days outside Georgetown and wrote Major General Horatio Gates reporting the death of his nephew Lt. Gabriel Marion and the desertion of many of his troops. He blamed the lack of a Continental presence and asked Gates to communicate soon. Patriots in the area needed to know what assistance Gates planned to offer.

Marion did gain valuable information. He learned the number of regular soldiers stationed in Georgetown as well as the armaments at their disposal. While Marion reported that his nephew died near White's Plantation, other sources state that Loyalists killed Gabriel Marion at Addison's Plantation. Loyalists captured the younger Marion. But after he surrendered, they then murdered him because his name was "Marion."

Allston's Plantation, Nov. 15, 1780

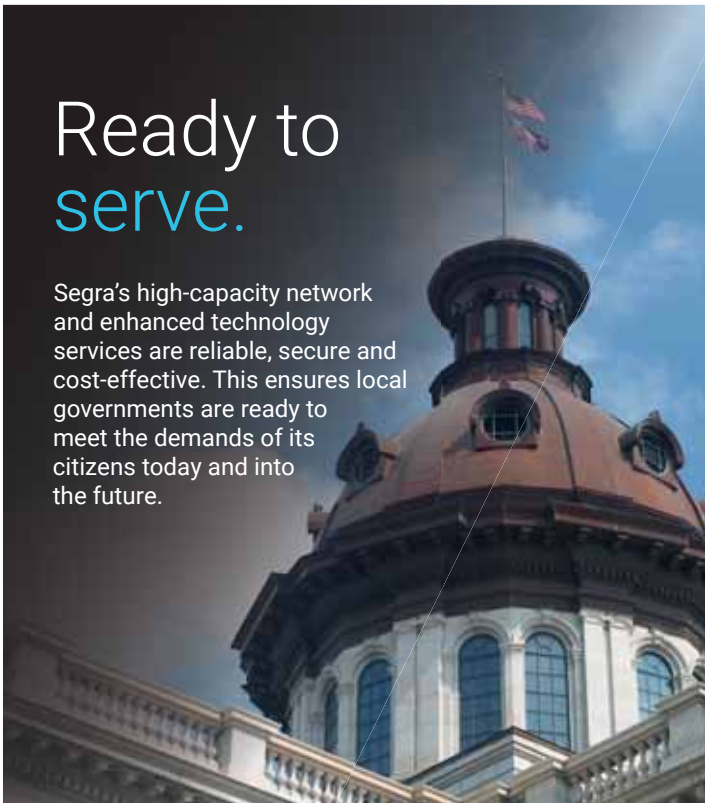
At the same time, Marion sent Horry to White's Plantation, he dispatched Captain John Melton to patrol the Sampit Road. Melton located a Loyalist camp at the plantation of Colonel William Allston. According to some accounts, Lt. Gabriel Marion accompanied Melton. Melton's troops engaged Loyalists commanded by Captain Jesse Barefield [Barfield]. Loyalists seized Gabriel Marion and beat him unconscious. At that point, one of the Loyalist recognized Gabriel and immediately shot and killed him.

On the following day, Marion's forces captured the culprit. One of Marion's men then shot and killed the perpetrator. Marion reprimanded the man for violating the "rules of war." He expected his troops to conduct themselves with the discipline of regular army soldiers.

Georgetown, Dec. 25, 1789

Lt. Col. Nisbet Balfour, the British commander in Charlestown, sent Capt. John Saunders and his troop of Queen's Rangers to Georgetown. However, Saunders wanted to return to New York, so, he rode to Winnsboro to discuss the matter with Lt. General Charles, Lord Cornwallis. Instead, Saunders sent Lt. John Wilson on to Georgetown. Wilson then began patrolling the area.

(See *Roadside Guide*, P. 38)



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Roadside Guide ... (Continued from P. 37)

The British commander already at Georgetown was Lt. Col. George Campbell, who decided to join the Queen's Rangers on one of their patrols. On Christmas Day, this group encountered about 50 mounted Patriot Militia. Lt. John Wilson charged, and the Patriots dispersed. Lt. Wilson was wounded in the exchange, and most of the Patriots escaped.

Georgetown, Dec. 28, 1780

Attempting to assess British strength in Georgetown, Marion dispatched Lt. Colonel Peter Horry to the area. Horry organized an ambush at "the Camp" near Georgetown. Cornet Thomas Merritt with rangers and cavalry were guarding a party of foragers. Merritt crossed in front of Horry's ambush with two young women. The chivalrous Horry did not attack and instead traveled to White's Plantation seeking breakfast. There, they found female member of the White family, as well as, the young women seen earlier, who were Loyalists.

Horry's sentry then sounded the alarm, and Horry and his men pursued Merritt's rangers. The latter fled back to their camp near Georgetown. Later, on December 28, Horry and his force met another group of Loyalists, commanded by Major Micajah Gainey, at Black Ferry Road. During that conflict, Gainey was wounded seriously enough that he needed several months to recover. Gainey was an important Loyalist leader in the area.

Georgetown/Waccamaw Neck, Jan. 6/13, 1781

As a result of Marion's success raiding British foraging parties,

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in January 1781, Lt. Colonel George Campbell, the British commander for Georgetown, led a troop in search of Marion and his raiders. Enroute, Campbell dispatched Lt. John Wilson to investigate a suspicious group of men on a roadway. At that time, hidden Patriots commanded by Lt. Colonel Peter Horry ambushed them, captured several British soldiers, and killed or wounded others. When the regular British troops counterattacked, the Patriots withdrew.

Georgetown, Jan. 24, 1781

During the night of January 24, Lt. Colonel Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee and now Brigadier General Francis Marion launched a surprise two-pronged attack on the town of Georgetown. Major General Nathanael Greene commissioned Lee and Marion to coordinate in driving the British from South Carolina.

Marion's men attacked by land, while Lee's infantry approached by boat. Captain Patrick Carnes and Captain Michael Rudolph hid their troops on an island in the river. At the time, several hundred troops, under the command of Lt Colonel George Campbell, defended Georgetown. The British had fortified the town with cannon.

Lee's troops landed successfully—undetected by the British. Captain Carnes led his men to seize Lt. Colonel Campbell while Rudolph's force contained the Georgetown garrison. Meanwhile, Marion and his men entered the town from the west and rendezvoused with Lee's troops. The lack of British resistance surprised Lee and Marion. The British troops did not fire, and the Loyalists holed up in nearby houses. The commanders paroled Campbell and his officers and withdrew from Georgetown and made camp along the Santee River. The Patriots now had a realistic understanding of the fortifications of Georgetown. Marion used this information for his later successful action against the town.

According to J. D. Lewis, this was the first action for the newly created SC Second Brigade of Militia, a unit that would develop into a potent force and contribute to forcing the British to evacuate South Carolina.

DePeyster's Capture, Feb 21, 1781

Captain James DePeyster with a party of North Carolina Loyalists occupied the home of Colonel James Postell. When he learned this intrusion, Captain John Postell, Jr., under the command of Brigadier General Francis Marion, resolved to push the unwelcome guests from his father's home.

During the night of February 20, Postell with a small party from the Kingstree militia, surrounded the house. The next morning, they demanded DePeyster's surrender. When he delayed, Postell set fire to the house, and DePeyster surrendered.

Sampit Bridge, March 20/28, 1781

In March 1781, Lt. Colonel John Watson Tadewell-Watson and Marion exchanged letters before Marion granted safe travel for the British to take their wounded to Charleston. The British then broke camp and marched toward Sampit Bridge.

When the British arrived at the bridge, they discovered that Lt. Colonel Peter Horry had ordered the planks removed. Even though, Patriot troops held the opposite shore, Tadewell-Watson's advance guard with bayonets fixed charged ahead. Meanwhile, General Marion attacked Tadewell-Watson's rear guard. There was heavy fire as Tadewell-Watson's artillery fired at Marion and his men. As Marion

and his force turned from the cannon fire, Tadewell-Watson loaded his wounded and quickly abandoned the field.

According to J. D. Lewis, an angry Tadewell-Watson made camp complaining: "They [Marion's men] will not sleep and fight like gentlemen." During the night, the Patriots fired into their camps and during the day, they shot at his men from behind trees.

Black River, Apr. 2, 1781

This Black River engagement involved Patriot militia commanded by Lt. Colonel Lemuel Benton and a British foraging party under the command of Lt. John Wilson. The British left Georgetown with several flatboats and came ashore to "appropriate" needed supplies from a plantation on the Black River. Benton's men made several unsuccessful attacks before Wilson and his men routed them.

Georgetown, May 28, 1781

In May of 1781, Brigadier General Francis Marion resolved to attack the British who were occupying Georgetown. With Patriot success, Marion considered this a good opportunity to push the British back toward Charlestown. Consequently, he raised a force of militia and marched toward Georgetown.


By May of 1781, Georgetown had a new British commandant, Captain Robert Gray. Lt. Colonel Nisbet Balfour had ordered Gray to leave the city if Patriot troops attacked in force. So, while Marion began digging trenches for a siege, Gray and the British under his command instead of defending Georgetown, spiked their cannon, boarded ships in the harbor and evacuated the town. Marion's force destroyed the British fortifications. Marion then left the area to assist Major General Nathanael Greene with the siege of Ninety-Six, but he left Lt. Colonel Peter Horry in control of Georgetown.

Georgetown, Aug. 2, 1781

Although the British had evacuated Georgetown in June, the town remained on the British radar. As the British still controlled the port city of Charlestown, Patriot forces were sending supplies through the port of Georgetown for Major General Nathanael Greene and his Continental troops. Georgetown harbor offered a safe refuge for Patriot privateers.

To disrupt this supply line, in August, Balfour sent Captain Manson and the *Peggy*, a privateer, to destroy warehouses and all supplies along the wharves. Denied the right to land, Manson ordered a British galley to bombard the town. Manson then landed and set fire to the warehouses and other structures along the wharves. The fire also destroyed many homes and other buildings in Georgetown. Having wreaked great damage on the port city, the British withdrew.

Avant's Ferry, Nov. 14, 1782

Captain William Capers and men of the Berkeley County militia skirmished with an unknown force of British or Loyalist troops. The hard-fought war for American independence in Georgetown had finally ended. The following December, the British finally withdrew from Charlestown and Georgetown and the rest of the battered state began rebuilding. 

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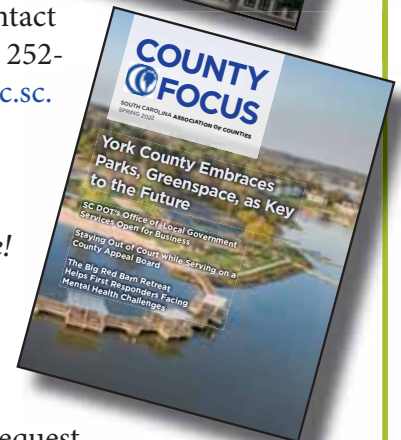
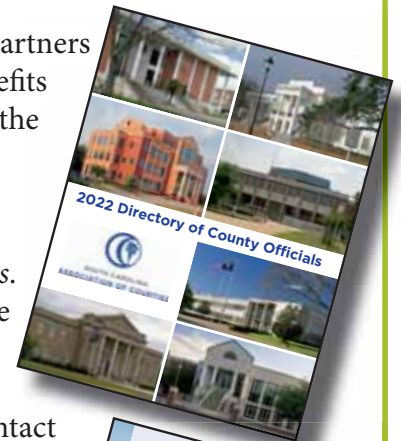
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Georgetown County (SC) Recreation
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Colleton	Orangeburg
Darlington	Pickens
Dillon	Richland
Dorchester	Saluda
Edgefield	Spartanburg
Fairfield	Sumter
Florence	Union
Georgetown	Williamsburg
Greenville	York

Bamberg County

● Bamberg County, sheriff's department, local municipalities, and law enforcement agencies switched to a new digital emergency radio system on June 1 that replaces the county's antiquated analog system. Most of county's infrastructure is more than 50 years old, and the county has added to the system over the years to meet the needs of our first responders. The radio is a critical piece of equipment for the county's first responders, and the new digital radio system is expected to enhance the safety of citizens as well as first responders.

The S.C. statewide 800 MHz Radio and Mobile Data System, known as Palmetto 800, is a cost-shared public/private partnership between state government, local governments, power utilities and Motorola Solutions, Inc. The goals of the shared Palmetto 800 system are: to provide public safety grade statewide coverage, enhance statewide interoperability and provide agencies with a superior communications technology at economical price to meet their public safety communications needs.

In operation since 1992, the network continues to expand and evolve to meet public safety responder needs. Today, the Palmetto

800 network is one of the largest shared statewide radio networks in the nation with more than 50,000 users.

● **Joey Preston**, Bamberg County administrator, was among others receiving the 2022 Presidential Service Award at the 73rd Commencement Convocation of Denmark Technical College.

"During the course of his long and distinguished public service, Joey Preston has been an impassioned advocate for Denmark Technical College, always working to partner with us and create opportunities for our renewal and growth," said Denmark Technical College President **Willie Todd**. "A firm believer in the lasting and intrinsic value of education, he has also been a strong and effective advocate for Denmark Tech and our students. Mr. Preston understands that when Denmark Tech grows, Bamberg County grows. We are exceptionally proud to be able to bestow this well-deserved honor on Mr. Preston."

The Presidential Award for Distinguished Service is presented at the discretion of the President of Denmark Technical College. Preston was recognized in celebration of work that exemplifies the Denmark Technical College core values of excellence, innovation, integrity, leadership, student centered and transparency.

Charleston County

● Golfbreaks by PGA TOUR I (Golfbreaks), a leading, worldwide golf vacation specialist, announced plans on June 9 to expand operations in Charleston County. The company's expansion is expected to create 32 new jobs in the next two years. Founded in 1998 in the United Kingdom, Golfbreaks specializes in organizing golf trips throughout the U.S. and around the world. The company is located in Mount Pleasant.

● Robert Thomas Iron Design, LLC, a modern blacksmithing company, announced plans on June 9 to expand operations in Charleston County. The company's \$2.9 million investment is expected to create 45 new jobs over the next three years.

Founded in 2013, Robert Thomas Iron Design, LLC intertwines traditional blacksmith techniques with modern machining and fabrication methods to craft iron pieces ranging from custom architectural ironwork commissions to volume-produced pieces of furniture, decorative hardware and cookware. The company is relocating to North Charleston.

● Charleston County's Consolidated 9-1-1 Center was recently recognized by The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch® (IAEDTM) as an Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) for emergency dispatching. IAED is the standard-setting organization for

(Continued on next page)

HIDDEN HISTORY OF GREENVILLE COUNTY

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emergency dispatch services worldwide. Accreditation (and subsequent re-accreditation) from the IAED is the highest distinction given to emergency communication centers, certifying that the center is performing at or above the established standards for the industry.

- Charleston County announced on May 18 that it was one of four communities selected for participation in the launch of the Just Home Project, a national program designed to advance community-driven efforts to break the link between housing instability and jail incarceration.

The initiative is led by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, with technical support and coordination by the Urban Institute. Collaboration with local organizations and agencies will be a top priority for Charleston County as it leads the region in the Just Home Project. More information on Charleston County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council's work with the Safety and Justice Challenge can be found at cjcc.charlestoncounty.org.

- Charleston County councilmembers recognized 9-1-1 telecommunicators, **Bianca Anderson** and her supervisor, **Miriam Cousino**, on May 10 for their roles in

gathering information on a bomb threat to a historically black college (HBC). The information they collected from the caller was shared with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, the Information Sharing Hub, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). There were numerous bomb threats made to HBC's across the country and the school threatened on the call was not in Charleston County.

"Cousino and Anderson acted in a professional manner where they used their training to create a 'relationship of trust.' This 'relationship' with the caller allowed them to obtain more information," said 9-1-1 Consolidated Dispatch Center Director **Jim Lake**. "This allowed the Sheriff's Office and The Hub to obtain additional information all of which assisted the FBI in their investigation."

In recognition of the significant contributions each had made in support of the FBI investigation, Cousino and Anderson received letters and certificates of appreciation, signed by Susan Ferensic, Special Agent in Charge of the Columbia Field Office.

Georgetown County

- Georgetown County Parks and Recreation was recently designated a Better Sports for Kids Quality Program Provider by the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS). The honor, like the Good Housekeeping Seal given to household products that meet high standards, recognizes organizations that have met an equally high standard when it comes to administering youth sports programming, according to NAYS.

To earn the Better Sports for Kids Quality Program Provider designation, a youth sports program must fulfill all the components associated with these five key requirements: Written policies and procedures; volunteer screening; coach training; parent education; and accountability.

- Winglts, a specialty designer and manufacturer of bathroom accessories, fastening systems and Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant products, recently announced plans to establish operations in Georgetown County. The company is expected to invest \$7.4 million and create more than 40 new jobs.

(See *County Update*, P. 44)



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NACo's Conference Calendar

2022

Annual Conference
Adams County, Colorado
July 21 - 24

2023

Legislative Conference
Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.
Feb. 11 - 14

Annual Conference
Austin, Texas
July 21 - 24

County Update ... (Continued from P. 42)

● **Eddie Parsons**, who works as a heavy equipment operator in the Public Works and Construction Services Division, was recently recognized as Georgetown County's Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2022. Parsons has worked for the county for nearly 24 years. Parsons is assigned to special projects for departments and divisions across county government, including stormwater, capital projects, environmental services, fire-EMS, the airport, and parks and recreation, as well as the state Department of Natural Resources.

● The Georgetown County Public Services Department in May recognized some of its most outstanding staff members at an employee appreciation luncheon as part of National Public Works Week festivities. Awards were presented for leadership, environmental stewardship and teamwork.

Kiah Williams received the Leadership Award and heralded as "the model of a true

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Or, just advertise in SCAC's 2023 *Directory of County Officials* and *County Focus Magazine*! To learn more, please call Stuart Morgan at (803) 252-7255 or email Stuart at smorgan@scac.sc and request advertising information.

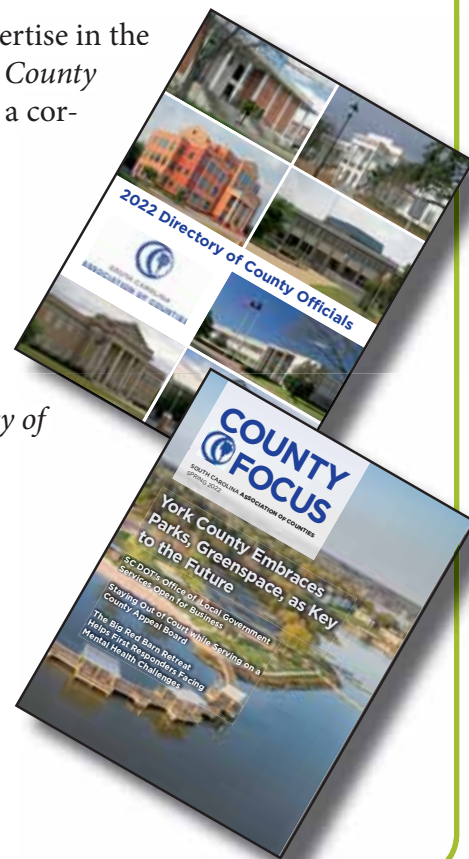
The advertising deadline for the fall issue of *County Focus Magazine* (Vol. 33, No. 3) is **Sept. 15**. The advertising deadline for the 2023 *Directory of County Officials* is **Dec. 31, 2022**.

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leader.”

Maureen Mulligan of the Environmental Services Division received the Green Earth Award for environmental stewardship.

Marion Jackson received the Team Player Award.

● **Rodney Simmons**, a heavy equipment operator with Georgetown County Public Works, won third place in the State Backhoe Rodeo, held in May in Greenville. In the Regional Backhoe Rodeo held earlier in the month, Harold West and Rodney Simmons of the county’s public works department won 1st place and second place respectively.

● **Harold West** and **Adonis Williams** of the Public Works Department recently received Innovation awards for their work on a project that allows county staff to work more quickly and efficiently. The project, which involves staff using GPS to shoot grade elevations for pipe inverts, ditch grades, property corners and road profiles, allows public works staff to define problems and determine corrective measures as well as create maps that reflect existing conditions.

● The Georgetown County Environmental Services Division was recently awarded a \$30,000 Palmetto Pride grant to help the division in its continuing efforts to reduce roadside litter countywide.

● Georgetown County announced on June 7 that the best college fishing teams in the country will take to the county’s five rivers this September, when Bassmaster returns to Winyah Bay.

The county’s Parks and Recreation Department will host the 2022 Strike King Bassmaster College Series National Championship, which will be presented by Bass Pro Shops from Sept. 2 to 4.

The event is expected to attract 260 anglers and 130 boats to the county, with teams coming from universities across the nation. Qualifications are based on the teams’ finishes in four regular-season stops held on Florida’s Harris Chain of Lakes, Lake Norman in North Carolina, Arkansas’ Norfolk Lake and Saginaw Bay in Michigan. A final Wild Card tournament on Alabama’s Logan Martin Lake gives teams waitlisted for the other events one last chance to make it into the field for Winyah Bay.

More information about the upcoming tournament will be released soon.

● Georgetown County Emergency Services announced in May that **James “Jim”**
(Continued on next page)



SOUTH CAROLINA
ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Conference Calendar

2022

Aug. 18.....Setoff Debt/GEAR
DoubleTree, Columbia

Oct. 5.....Continuing Education Update for Risk Managers
Embassy Suites, Columbia

Oct. 19Institute of Government

Oct. 20County Council Coalition
Embassy Suites, Columbia

Nov. 18S.C. Local Government Attorneys’ Institute
Virtual

Dec. 1 & 2Legislative Conference
AC Hotel, Greenville

Dec. 8 Newly Elected County Officials
DoubleTree, Columbia

2023

Jan. 24 & 25.....S.C. Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting
Omni Hotel, Hilton Head Island

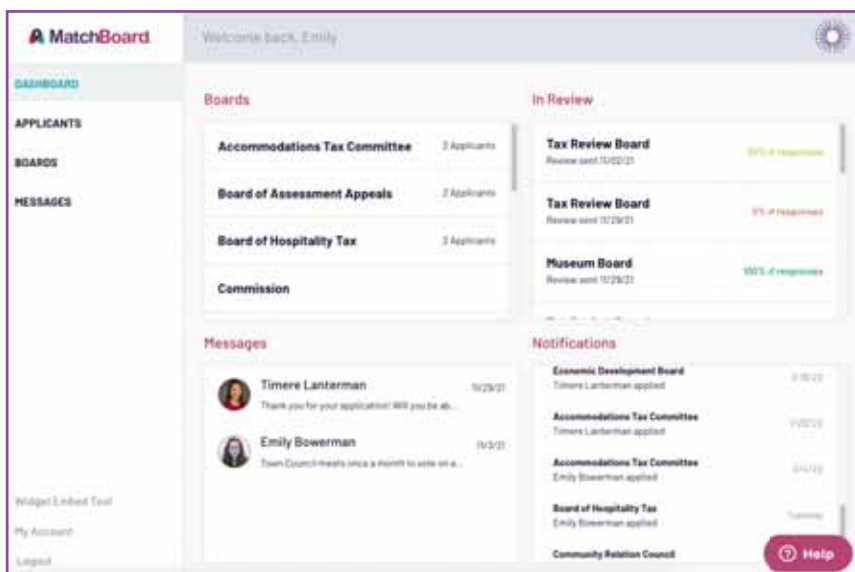
Feb. 22Mid-Year Conference

Feb. 23Institute of Government
USC Alumni Center, Columbia



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Falkenhagen had been selected as the new Fire Chief for Georgetown County Fire-EMS.

Falkenhagen, who has more than three decades of fire and EMS experience, previously served as a District Chief with Horry County Fire Department, EMS Supervisor for Georgetown County EMS, and most recently as a company officer with Georgetown County Fire-EMS. He officially assumed his position as fire chief on May 31.

- **Ricky Washington** retired in May from the Environmental Services Division of Georgetown County Public Services after 20 years of service. Washington joined Environmental Services as supervisor of the county's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) on May 6, 2002.

- **Steven Elliott**, Georgetown County Building Official, has been named Building Official of the Year by the Building Officials Association of S.C. Elliott, who began working for the county in 2007, was promoted to building official in 2018.

- **Sgt. Amy Glover** recently retired after serving the Sheriff's Office for more than 25 years. She served in a variety of positions, ending her career as supervisor at the Georgetown County Detention Center.

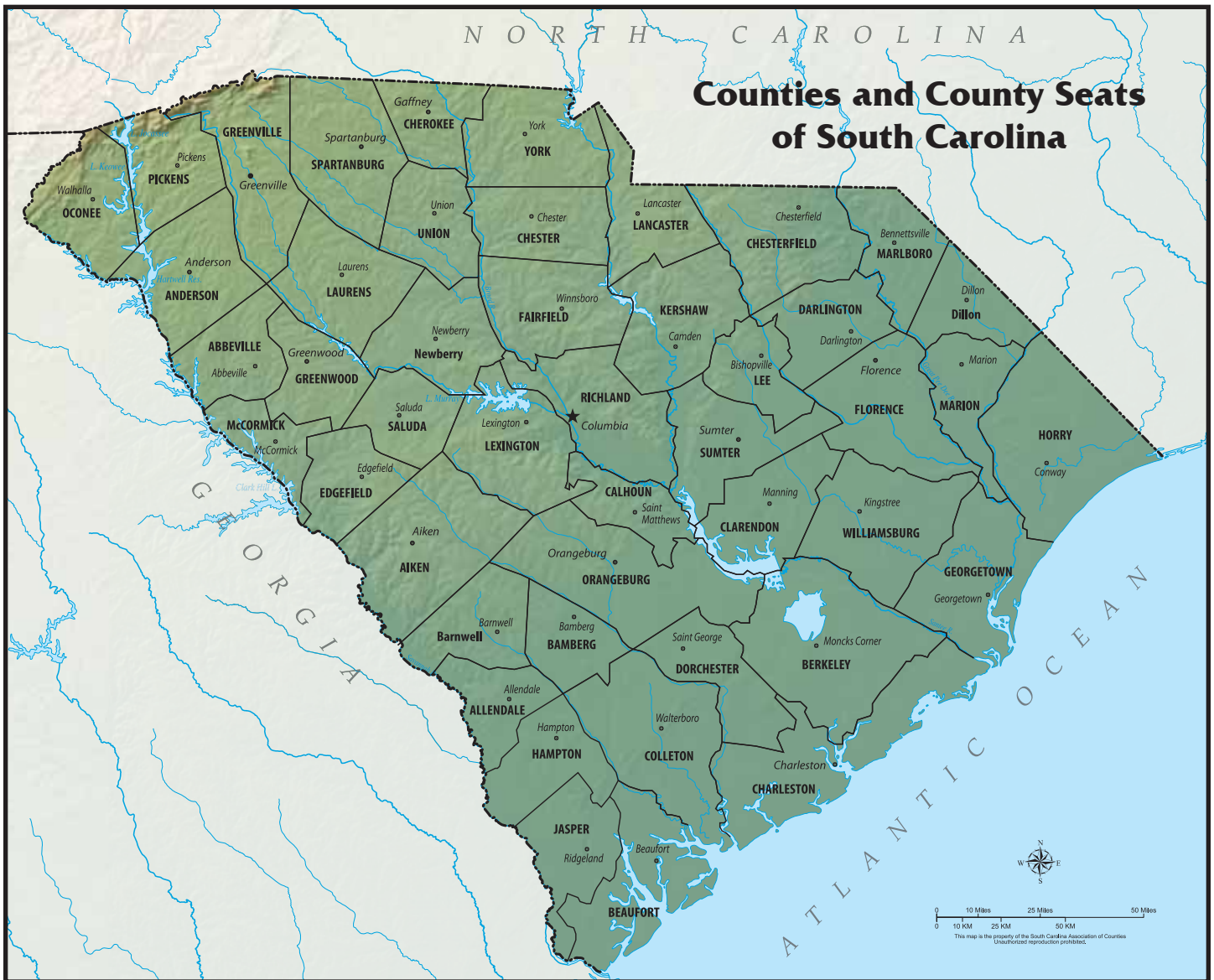
- **Corp. Alexis Grove** of the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office received Officer of the Quarter in May.

- Sheriff's Deputies **Christopher Perri**, **Corp. Drew Sims** and **Deputy Brian Wainscott** were named Georgetown County Sheriff's Office Deputies of the Quarter in May.

- **Kelly McWethy**, **Morgan Poston** and **Chealcee Taylor**, who work in Central Dispatch for the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office, were recently recognized as Employees of the Quarter.

- Georgetown County Emergency Services, in partnership with the City of Georgetown, graduated eight new firefighters from its first ever Firefighter Recruit School on March 25. Agencies usually send firefighter recruits for to the S.C. Fire Academy for necessary training, which costs from \$800 to \$1,000 per recruit, plus travel and lodging expenses. Due to high demand, it can be difficult to secure a seat in the classes, creating a delay in getting new firefighters trained and on the job.

"Fire departments everywhere are dealing with extreme manpower deficits due to a number of factors," said Brandon Ellis,



Georgetown County's Director of Emergency Services. While searching for solutions last summer, the idea of starting a local recruit school to train new firefighters in-house was

brought up as one component to addressing the issue. Training officers from both of the county's fire departments and the City of Georgetown worked together to create a

local training program in coordination with the regional State Fire Academy liaison. The program developed not only met, but exceeded expectations. *(Continued on next page)*

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ceeded state standards and can be achieved at a huge cost savings.

“Plus,” Ellis added, “(firefighter recruits)

get to train with the men and women they’re going to be working with every day.” The full graduation ceremony for the first Recruit School is available to view at [Youtube.com/GtCountySC](https://www.youtube.com/GtCountySC)

was associated with the official U.S. 50th Anniversary Vietnam War Commemoration, sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs through 2025 to honor American veterans of the Vietnam War and their families.



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Horry County

- Area military veterans of the Vietnam War were recognized at a special event titled, “Valor in Vietnam” on May 31, the day after Memorial Day, at the McCown Auditorium, located at 805 Main Street in Conway.

The event was sponsored by the Horry County Museum and the United Bank Center for Military & Veteran Studies at Coastal Carolina University, and was free to the public. The event

Oconee County

- **Jamie Gilbert** was hired in April as Director of Economic Development at the Oconee Economic Alliance. Prior to being selected to lead Oconee County’s economic development efforts, Gilbert was hired in 2016 to build and manage the newly created Lancaster County Department of Economic Development (LCDED).

During his career, he has facilitated the recruitment and expansion of hundreds of global businesses in a variety of sectors including advanced manufacturing, aerospace, customer and financial services, food processing, headquarters operations, information technology, life sciences and metal fabrication. In 2019, Gilbert was named one of the Top 50 Economic Developers in North America by Consultant Connect. 

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