

The Georgetown County Chronicle



A monthly e-newsletter produced by Georgetown County, S.C., for its residents and visitors.

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- County mourns longtime bailiff, Page 2
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Calendar

March 30 – Filing closes for June primary elections, noon.

March 30 – Capital Project Sales Tax Commission Meeting, 6 p.m. See page 6.

April 13 – Capital Project Sales Tax Commission Meeting, 6 p.m. Virtual meeting anticipated

April 27 – Capital Project Sales Tax Commission Meeting, 6 p.m. Virtual meeting anticipated

April 28 – Georgetown County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. Virtual meeting anticipated.

See information about cancellations and postponements on Page 6. For updated information, future meetings and more, visit www.gtcounty.org or visit us on Facebook.

Volume 8, Issue 7

March 2020

County offices remain closed to the public, staff still working

Georgetown County government temporarily closed the majority of its facilities to the public on March 18, a measure that was given no definite end date. County staff is still reporting to work during this time and continues serving the public via phone and online. The measure came just two days after the County declared a State of Emergency due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The step is part of Georgetown County's effort to protect residents and employees as jurisdictions across the nation deal with the worldwide threat of COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus. The highly contagious virus has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization and poses a significant threat to those in the county as it continues to spread.

"This is an unprecedented situation for us," said Georgetown County Interim Administrator Wesley Bryant. "We want to keep providing services to the best of our ability, but at the same time, we want to lead by example and do our part to keep our employees and our community safe. It's going to require some innovation and creativity on our part as we move forward and figure this out as the situation evolves."



Joey Manigault, a community specialist with the Parks and Recreation Department, hangs a closure notice on the front door at Beck Recreation Center on March 18.

A few key facilities remain open with some alterations to normal operations to limit person-to-person contact and the spread of germs. Those facilities are as follows:

- **The landfill and community recycling centers** will continue to be open to the public for normal hours of operation. However, individuals are asked not to socialize at these facilities. Staff may elect to limit the number of users on site at any time. No loitering will

See "Closure," Page 3

Angela Christian will take office as new administrator March 30

After a month-long gap, Georgetown County will have a new County Administrator on the job beginning March 30.

After an exhaustive search process, Angela Christian was hired for the job following a unanimous vote by County Council on March 10. She is former town manager for the Town of Newport, N.C., having held that position from 2014 until 2019. Prior to that, she was Chief Operations Officer and deputy county manager for Onslow County, N.C., which has a population of 180,000.

She also worked as finance director for Columbus, Ga., and was Deputy City Manager for the City of Bristol, Tenn.

She and her husband, Junie, said they are looking forward to becoming part of the community and getting to know its residents, along with county staff and officials.



Christian

Christian has a Master of Public Administration from the University of Tennessee, and a bachelor's degree in political science from Georgia Southern University.

Former County Administrator Sel Hemingway retired Feb 29. County Council had been searching for a new administrator since he announced his plans last summer. In the time between Hemingway's departure and Christian's arrival, former County Attorney Wesley Bryant has been serving as Interim Administrator.

IN MEMORIAM: County mourns longtime bailiff and community servant

Ely Legrande Little, 92, widower of Eloyce Williamson Little, passed away peacefully on March 8 following a brief illness. He died at his residence with his loving family around him.

Mr. Little was employed as a bailiff at the Georgetown County Judicial Center, where he was a beloved member of the staff for more than 23 years.

Mr. Little was born Oct. 29, 1927, in Horry County, a son of the late Coy Lonerson Little and Ora Mae Rogers Little. The second of four children, he grew up in the unincorporated Floyds community of Horry County. He was a graduate of Floyds High School and the University of South Carolina. Before graduating from college, he served in the Army at a military hospital headquarters in Korea.

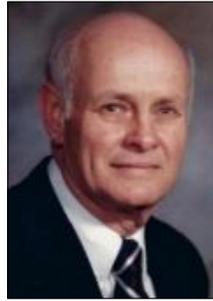
Mr. Little began a lifelong career in education as a teacher and coach for Georgetown County School District at Pleasant Hill High School in the fall of 1953. It was his first job in the field of education, and in a new community that he would never leave. Pleasant Hill became his home.

In 1968, Mr. Little received his master's degree from Western Carolina University, and shortly after that became the principal of Pleasant Hill High School, serving in that position from the fall of 1969 until his retirement in the spring of 1993. He served as the athletic conference chairman, on various athletic conference committees, and the Georgetown County Higher Education Com-

mission. He also served on the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, the Pleasant Hill Community Organization Board, and the Horry-County Technical College Education Foundation.

Both before and after his retirement as principal of Pleasant Hill High School in 1993, he served as a crop insurance adjuster, as well as a rural route substitute mail carrier for the Postal Service for six years. Before being elected to the Georgetown County Board of Education in 2002, he served as the elected Chairman of the Georgetown County Soil and Water Conservation District. From 1996 until only a few weeks before his death, he worked as a bailiff for Georgetown County.

His late wife was a retired teacher and librarian for Georgetown County School District at Pleasant Hill Elementary and Middle Schools. The couple were married for 62 years and had one daughter and two grandchildren. Though longtime members of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, both Mr. and Mrs. Little faithfully attended First Baptist Church Georgetown each Sunday for the past 14 years.



Ely Little

Mr. Little is survived by a daughter, Beth Little Roberts (Andy) of Georgetown; a grandson, Walt Roberts of Washington, DC; and a granddaughter, Elizabeth Roberts Bullard (John) of Georgetown. Also surviving is a brother, James C. Little (Bonnie) of Nichols; several nieces and nephews; and special friends Sydney Johnson and Vickie C. Tompkins.

In addition to his wife and parents, Mr. Little was predeceased by one brother, Herman W. Little, and one sister, Coleen Little Hill.

Mr. Little's family extends profound gratitude to all those who enriched the spiritual life and care of both Mr. Little and his family members during these last few difficult weeks of his life.

Funeral services took place March 12 at First Baptist Church Georgetown, officiated by the Rev. Dr. Ted Sherrill. Mr. Little was buried at Mt. Olive Cemetery on Pennyroyal Road.

Memorials may be made to the Mt. Olive Cemetery Fund and mailed to P.O. Box 1590, Georgetown, SC 29442-1590.

Our libraries are temporarily closed, but that doesn't mean your kids have to miss daily

STORY TIME!

Join our Georgetown County children's librarians online every weekday for a new story.

Free for you and your family at on the Library's [YouTube page](#)

([YouTube.com/GeorgetownCountyLibr](https://www.youtube.com/GeorgetownCountyLibr))



Get the Chronicle

At Georgetown County, we want our residents and property owners kept abreast of what's going on inside their local government. That's why we created the Georgetown County Chronicle. It's a vehicle for information about county services and events, important messages from county officials and behind-the-scenes glimpses at how government works.

You can find the Chronicle on our website at www.gtcounty.org or through our Facebook page. If you'd rather have it delivered to your inbox, e-mail jbroach@gtcounty.org with the subject line "send me the Chronicle."

That's also the place to send questions and comments about this newsletter and its content. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

www.gtcounty.org

Closure

Continued from Front Page

be allowed. All swap shops will be closed until further notice.

- **The Georgetown Airport** and terminal building will remain open. Staff will take steps to limit the number of people in the facility at any one time.

- **The Register of Deeds** office in the historic courthouse continues to allow very limited admittance, which will be by appointment only. See further details later in this article.

- **The Office of Elections and Voter Registration** remains open for regular hours to accommodate filing for partisan elected offices, which opened March 16. Staff will take actions to limit the number of people inside the facility at once. Anyone wishing to file should call (843) 545-3339 for an appointment.

All other county facilities are closed to the public until further notice. Hours of operation for most county offices will remain at 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., though some offices may reduce staff to accommodate illnesses, absences due to lack of childcare while schools are out, and to allow for a contingency plan to replace staff who become ill or who are required to be quarantined due to exposure to someone who has the virus. Some offices and departments may direct staff to work from home. Office hours, email addresses and phone numbers for all departments are available at gtcounty.org. A directory of departments is available via phone at (843) 545-3063.

For residents who need to drop off documents, payments, permit requests or other business items, the county has established a dropbox inside the front door of its main building – the historic county courthouse, located at 129 Screven Street.

Additionally:

- **The Treasurer's Office** and **Auditor's Office** have extended the due date for taxes on all vehicles and watercraft due between March 31 and April 30. The S.C. Department of Motor Vehicles has agreed to waive penalties for the same period. Taxes may be paid online at georgetowncountysctax.com or by phone at 1-833-594-5241. For more information regarding tax payments, call (843) 545-3102.

- While the **Bureau of Aging Services** has cancelled its congregate dining programs, clients will receive regular wellness tele-

phone calls from staff. Clients may also elect to transfer to the county's home delivered meal program until the congregate dining program is restored. To sign up, call (843) 325-6716. The program is open to new and pre-existing clients.

- **Georgetown County Circuit Courts** have postponed all jury trials. Non-jury proceedings will be scheduled/held at the judge's discretion. All roll calls and other large gatherings are cancelled until further notice.

Filings and payments (money orders, business checks or cashier's checks only) may be left in the dropbox located outside the entrance of the Judicial Center, 401 Cleland Street, Georgetown. The dropbox will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. Call the number on the dropbox to notify the clerk's office. The documents will immediately be retrieved and processed. Cloned copies will be mailed to the attorney.

- **Georgetown County Summary Courts** have cancelled all court sessions until further notice. Parties will be notified by mail of their rescheduled dates. Those needing to make payments for any of the county's magistrate offices may do so at the drop box location at Central Traffic Court, 333 Cleland Street. No cash and no personal checks are accepted – money orders or cashier's checks only. Please include a copy of the ticket or case number with payment. Payments may also be made online at gtcounty.org.

- Family Court emergency hearings will be scheduled on an as needed basis. For any other Family Court concerns, call (843) 545-3215.

- Any **Probate Court** hearings for non-emergency matters shall be continued to a future date and time. Filings can be made by mail, or if time is of the essence, staff will try to accommodate. Customers are asked to consider waiting several weeks to apply for marriage licenses. Please keep in mind that couples only have to observe the mandatory 24-hour waiting period to receive a license after applying, so there is no need to apply far in advance. However, for those who cannot wait, call the Probate office for specific instructions. For other needs or concerns, call (843) 545-3274 to see if staff can help you via phone or online.

- In the **Purchasing Office**, until further notice all bids must be submitted electronically through the Purchasing Department's Vendor Registry webpage. Instructions on how to submit bids electronically through

this system can be found online at gtcounty.org/purchasing. Any scheduled bid openings will still be opened at the designated date and time as listed in the bid document or related addendum. However, due to the office closure to the public, these bid openings will not be open to the public, but will be accompanied by at least one county staff witness. As usual, following the bid opening, bid tabulation results will be posted online for the public's viewing.

- **The Parks and Recreation Department** has put a hold on all sports and community programs. Staff is continuing work to maintain parks and clean facilities, and is creating online programming to help community residents stay active and entertained during this time.

- Those seeking permits from the **Building office** may print permit application forms online at gtcounty.org/building. Completed applications & scanned copies of plans may be emailed to blldpermits@gtcounty.org. Credit card payments can be made by calling the Building Department at (843) 545-3116. Check payments can be mailed to Georgetown County Building Department, P.O. Drawer 421270, Georgetown, SC, 29442. For assistance, or if you are unable to access our permits online, please contact the Building Department at (843) 545-3116.

- Those seeking permits from the **Planning and Zoning Department** may print permit application forms online at gtcounty.org/Planning/ or gtcounty.org/Zoning/. Completed applications and scanned copies of attachments may be emailed to plncomm@gtcounty.org. Credit card payments can be made by calling the Building Department at (843) 545-3116. Check payments and hard copies can be mailed to Georgetown County Planning Department, P.O. Drawer 421270, Georgetown, SC, 29442. For assistance, or if you are unable to access our applications online, please contact the Planning Department at 843-545-3158 or the Zoning Department at 843-545-3602.

- **The Register of Deeds Office** will allow paralegals admittance to the Record Room by appointment only. Admittance will be limited to three people at a time, limited to approximately four hours per appointment. Appointment times will be 8:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and 12:45-5 p.m. To make an appointment, call (843) 545-3088. Those receiving appointments must remain at their assigned work station during their appointed

See "Closure," Page 4

What residents can do to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic

If you're feeling helpless as you watch the news these days and see the infection count rise, you're not alone. But there are some simple actions you can take to help decrease the odds of catching the new Coronavirus, and slow the spread to allow healthcare workers to keep up and give everyone their best shot at recovery.

1. Wash your hands: First and foremost is something we should all be doing already. Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly. Soap and water works best. Try to keep it going for 20 seconds for a thorough washing.

2. Not all sanitizers are created equally: If you don't have access to a sink, soap and water, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will do. But for it to be effective, you should use a sanitizer comprised of at least 60 percent alcohol.

3. Cover your cough, but not with your

hands: This has become the general guideline for the common cold, as well as more serious illnesses. If you cough or sneeze, always cover it, but it's best not to use your hand. That spreads germs to whatever you touch after. Instead, cough into your elbow or a tissue that you throw away immediately after.

4. Stay home if you're sick: We know, that's sometimes easier said than done. We all have responsibilities that don't disappear when we're sick. But if you have any symptoms of COVID-19, based on its prevalence and how contagious it is, it's best to just assume you have it. Don't risk spreading it to others. Call in sick at work and if you need help getting supplies, pre-pay online and ask a friend or neighbor to pick them up and leave them at your door. This is vitally important to stop the spread of this virus. Symptoms of COVID-19 include a dry

cough, fever and shortness of breath. It can affect anyone of any age and have serious complications. If you think you may be infected, call your healthcare provider or get a free virtual screening from [MUSC](#). Of course, you can't control what others do when they are sick, so try to avoid any sick individuals who are not staying home.

5. Social Distancing is vital: This is key. Stay home as much as possible. Don't have visitors. Ideally, go out only for emergencies and weekly grocery trips, or to places where you aren't likely to run into others (hiking in the woods or boating for example). If you go out, avoid anywhere crowded. With the exception of those who live with you, try to keep a distance from other people, ideally at least 6 feet. Social distancing works to slow the spread of illness and will allow our healthcare system to keep up. Visit [CDC.gov](#) for more info.

Closure

Continued from Front Page

time. Documents may be left in the dropbox at the front of the courthouse. The Register of Deeds staff will check this box several times a day and asks that all documents be in a marked envelope with clear directions for where and to whom it should be directed. Items dropped off without a paralegal's name on them will be recorded upon receipt.

- Staff at the **Assessor's Office** is continuing with necessary steps for this year's reassessment. While many staff members are in the field, limited staff remains in the office to answer calls and online inquiries. Documents may be left at the dropbox at the front entrance of the historic courthouse. For more information, call (843) 545-3017.

- **The Library System** has closed all its facilities and ceased Bookmobile service, but public Wi-Fi is still accessible from all branch parking lots. Additionally, staff is providing services online, including daily children's story hours and more.

- **The Sheriff's Office** is operating at full capacity, but will limit access to the public, as well as limiting non-essential responsibilities (i.e. fingerprints, shooting range permits, etc.). Access to the building by the public will be limited to the lobby only. Any questions can be relayed to the front office

by phone. While deputies continue to respond to calls and serve the public, dispatch may ask callers questions about their health and recent travel. Additionally, deputies may ask residents to step outside their homes when they respond to a call for the deputy's health and safety. This will not apply to emergency calls in which immediate contact is required. Deputies may also respond to non-emergency calls by phone. Those entering the jails are being screened by medical professionals prior to admittance.

- **Georgetown County Fire/EMS and Midway Fire/Rescue** continue to respond to calls as usual, but will temporarily disallow the public from entering stations to limit the potential spread of illness. Staff are being diligent in their preventative measures. All station personnel have been provided with PPEs, (personal protective equipment), and throughout the day are wiping down and decontaminating vehicles when necessary. Dispatchers for 911 are asking callers specific questions before first responders are sent to their location, such as if the caller is feeling ill or if they've traveled recently, or been in contact with someone who has traveled recently out of the country or state. Any member of the public seeking any type of department report should call the department for directions. Effective immediately, the following services will be put on hold

until further notice: Company inspections, smoke detector installations, child safety seat installations, volunteer monthly group training and meetings (continue to complete online training), all department-sponsored public events, and CPR classes. Career personnel will continue their training only at their station and online.

- All county **board and commission** meetings, with the exception of County Council and Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) Commission meetings, are cancelled until further notice. County Council and CPST meetings will be conducted virtually and livestreamed at [facebook.com/gtcountysc](#).

The county has also strongly recommend that all state-appointed boards and commissions within the county cancel meetings until further notice or hold meetings virtually. The county is making every effort to keep meetings as open and public as possible at this time, while taking steps to preserve the health and safety of staff, board and commission members, and the public.

- **County beaches** remain open. However, crowds larger than three on beaches may be dispersed by law enforcement. Individuals are encouraged to practice social distancing both indoors and outdoors for the safety of our community. Georgetown County is expected to enact limits on short-term rentals during an emergency meeting on March 27.

Deputies helping residents in quarantine receive prescription medications at home

As of March 23, Georgetown County Sheriff's deputies are performing an additional services for residents, as many at high risk for the new COVID-19 virus quarantine at home.

As many county departments and divisions were forced to begin limiting services and health officials ordered social distancing, Sheriff Carter Weaver announced plans to have deputies begin delivering prescription medications. Deliveries will be made by request to older adults and other county residents identified as having higher risk of serious health complications if they contract the virus.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says people who are at higher risk from severe illness include adults age 65 or older, pregnant women, and those with underlying medical conditions, such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, HIV and asthma.

The Sheriff's Office has coordinated with pharmacies in Georgetown County on pick-up and delivery of prescription medication under the following guidelines:

- People must call their pharmacy as they normally do for a prescription and inform someone a deputy will pick it up for delivery;
- The person prescribed for the medicine then calls the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office at (843) 546-5102 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday-Friday to arrange a pick-up and delivery;
- The medication's cost must be pre-paid;
- The recipient shows the deputy a valid photo ID to prove ownership and signs for the prescription when it is delivered.

"Please be patient with us as we get this underway," Weaver said. "I hope this helps stop the spread in some small way."

Sheriff warns of Coronavirus scams



Georgetown County Sheriff Carter Weaver is asking people to be wary of solicitations that try to use anxiety over the new Coronavirus/ COVID-19 to sell products, access personal information or assist a family member in trouble.

One couple was contacted recently by a scammer claiming their granddaughter had been arrested and asking them to send money immediately to keep her from being put in jail and exposed to Coronavirus. Other scams have involved coronavirus safety kits, COVID-19 testing kits and other healthcare services. Official sources, including hospitals and the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control are the only place to get testing kits for this virus, and there is currently no vaccine for COVID-19.

Any solicitation using fear of the coronavirus as a sales tool should be viewed as irregular and regarded with a high level of skepticism.

If you have questions about any coronavirus solicitation, call the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office at (843) 546-5102. Find Coronavirus safety tips on page 4.

So, what's the deal with social distancing? Here are the facts.

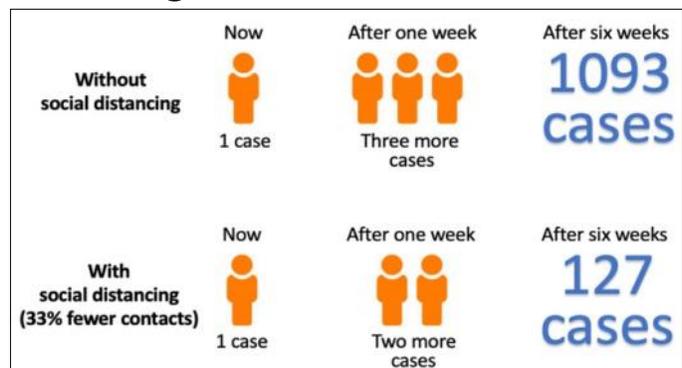
Before last month, most of us had probably never even heard of "social distancing" before. Now, it's part of our everyday vocabulary. We've all been told we should be doing it, but many still aren't sure exactly what "it" is.

Are we supposed to stay in our homes at all times? Can we go to the beach? For a walk? And how much of a difference does it really make anyway?

As you can see in the graphic on the right, social distancing makes a huge impact on decreasing the number of people who become infected. While this may not stop the disease, it slows the spread enough to allow the healthcare system to keep up. If the epidemic isn't slowed, hospitals may not have enough, beds, ventilators, etc. to treat seriously ill patients. This means patient's who would have survived with proper treatment could die. While the virus is said to be most dangerous to those over age 65 and those with other underlying medical conditions, people of all ages can be infected and become seriously ill, even if they are otherwise healthy.

How to do social distancing like a pro

Social distancing is not the same as self-isolation, which is recommended for the most at-risk individuals. Self-isolating involves staying at home alone, with no going out at all. Those who are social



distancing can still go out, but should keep others at a distance — ideally at least six feet. Don't go to crowded places or attend group gatherings. No playdates or visitors at home. But you can get take-out from a restaurant, visit a grocery store or the beach, pick up medication, etc. — just keep others at a distance. And social distancing doesn't have to mean being lonely! Group video chats and phone calls are still a great way to stay connected, or even enjoy a social distancing dinner date.

County to conduct public meetings virtually

Due to the State of Emergency in Georgetown County surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic, Georgetown County will conduct meetings of County Council and of the Capital Project Sales Tax Commission virtually until further notice.

All other upcoming board and commission meetings have been cancelled until further notice, and the county has recommended meetings of state boards and commissions also be cancelled temporarily.

The next meeting of the Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST) Commission will take place March 30 at 6 p.m. Commission members will participate via Go To Meeting web conferencing software. The meeting will be streamed live from the County's Facebook page at [facebook.com/gtcountysc](https://www.facebook.com/gtcountysc) to allow the public to attend virtually. The agenda includes review of proposed projects submitted by County Council, establishing a deadline for submission of other projects, prioritization of type of projects, and determining methods for public education and input.

The Commission had its first meeting March 17 — virtually with audio-only streaming available. This time, the public should be able to see as well as hear the meeting. The first meeting was primarily an introduction to the process the Commission will be going through. Officers were also elected. Danisha McClary was elected commission chair person. Nate Fata was elected vice chairman.

The Commission will meet every other Monday until its job is complete.

The county had its first virtual County Council meeting on March 24 with an abbreviated agenda. With the exception of a brief glitch with the sound at the beginning of the meeting, the system worked well and county officials hope for a smooth process at future virtual meetings. The council meeting is posted in its entirety on the County's [Facebook Page](#) and its [YouTube channel](#).

"While the virtual format isn't ideal, we're experiencing something unprecedented right now, and we're all having to find creative ways to continue our daily lives and to serve the public while protecting the health and safety of our community," said Wesley Bryant, Georgetown County Interim Administrator. "We're using technology to lead by example and follow directives regarding social distancing, while trying to keep meetings as accessible to the public and as transparent as possible."

How to recommend projects to the CPST Commission

The Georgetown County Capital Project Sales Tax Commission is accepting recommendations from the public for projects to be included in the sales tax ordinance. The ordinance will appear on the ballot in November.

County residents may submit their suggestions via e-mail, regular mail or fax. A form is available at www.gtcounty.org. The commission has not yet set a deadline for the projects to be submitted, but is expected to do so at its next meeting on March 30. All suggestions received will be reviewed and considered by the commission, which will prioritize projects utilizing resident input.

Completed recommendation forms may be e-mailed to jcombs@gtcounty.org or faxed to (843) 545-3648. Hard copies can be mailed to CPST Commission, C/O Janet Combs, 108 Screven St., Georgetown, SC 29440. For more information, call (843) 545-3325.



CANCELLATIONS

Due to the COVID-19 situation, a number of upcoming events have had to be either cancelled or postponed. If you have questions about upcoming county-sponsored events not mentioned here, call (843) 545-3164 or email jbroach@gtcounty.org.

Taxpayer Academy

Georgetown County's inaugural Taxpayer Academy, set to take place in April — which is National County Government Month — has been postponed. A new date will be selected and announced at a later time. The Academy was intended to teach residents about local government operations and how their tax dollars are spent. If you would like to be put on a list for notification when a new date is set, please contact jbroach@gtcounty.org or call (843) 545-3164.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Georgetown County's spring Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Paper Shredding Event, scheduled for April 4, has been cancelled due to concerns over the Coronavirus/COVID-19 for the safety of the community. Please look for future advertising of the County's fall HHW event.

The Great Georgetown County Cleanup

The Great Georgetown County Cleanup, originally scheduled for Earth Day, will be postponed during the ongoing COVID-19 situation. We will announce a new date at a later time, when we have a better idea of when we may be getting back to normal activities. However, those who were looking forward to participating can still use Earth Day as an opportunity to take a solo walk, get some fresh air, and pick up any litter they see along the way. If you choose to collect on solo or family walks, please send photos to jbroach@gtcounty.org or share on our social media accounts.

Find us online!

Whether you're looking for jobs, the latest news or to contact a specific department, online is a great way to stay updated or get in touch with us.

Visit our website at www.gtcounty.org. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. Just search for GtCountySC.



Teleworking Perks & Pitfalls

In an effort to help Stop the Spread, our staff is working from home as much as possible. There are some definite benefits, like comfortable clothes and extremely adorable co-workers. Pictured below, our Public Works Manager Stephen Williams is pictured with his extremely adorable new supervisor, Otto. At bottom, Janet Combs, an administrative assistant in our Public Services Department appears to be at risk of eating all her quarantine snacks at once. As of the publication of this newsletter, all our departments are still working, either from home or on site. Those working on site are practicing social distancing to the best of their ability. Georgetown County is working hard to strike a balance between keeping services up and running and protecting the health and safety of our staff and our community. We can be reached via phone or e-mail during normal business hours.



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Government at
www.facebook.com/gtcountysc**

Candidate filing open until noon March 30 16 have filed in county so far

While most Georgetown County facilities are closed to the public, the Elections and Voter Registration Office has remained open to accommodate candidate filing for the statewide June primary election. Filing opened March 16 and will close on March 30 at noon.

As of the end of the business day on March 26, a total of 16 candidates had filed for office. A dozen of those filed on the first day of filing.

Candidates who have filed as of the time of this writing include (in order of filing):

- Sheriff Carter Weaver Sr., seeking re-election, was the first candidate to file for office during the filing period. Weaver was first elected just this year to fill the remaining term of Lane Cribb, who passed away unexpectedly last summer.
- Chase Ridgeway filed for the office of Coroner. Longtime Coroner Kenny Johnson has announced he will not seek re-election. Ridgeway currently serves as a Deputy Coroner.
- Allison Sippel Peteet has filed for a second term as Treasurer.
- Brian D. Shult has filed for re-election as Auditor.
- Sen. Stephen Goldfinch has filed for re-election to S.C. Senate District 34.
- Leigh Powers Boan has filed for a second term as Probate Judge.
- Raymond Newton has filed for re-election to County Council District 5. He was elected last year to fill the unexpired term of Austin Beard.
- Lillie Jean Johnson has filed for re-election to County Council District 4.
- Alma While filed for re-election as Clerk of Court.
- Rep. Lee Hewitt filed for re-election to S.C. House of Representatives District 108.
- Ron Charlton filed for re-election to County Council District 2.
- Rep. Carl L. Anderson filed for re-election to State House of Representatives District 103.
- Leona "Tiger" Miller filed to challenge Everett Carolina for County Council District 3. Carolina has not yet filed for re-election. Miller held the seat before Carolina was elected in 2016.
- Emily Cegledy filed to challenge Goldfinch for S.C. Senate District 34.
- Kelly Spann filed for S.C. Senate District 32, currently held by Ronnie A. Sabb.
- Birt Adams is also running for Sheriff. He opposed Weaver as a write-in candidate during the last election in February.

Anyone wishing to file for office is asked to make an appointment by calling (843) 545-3339.

St. Frances Animal Center seeks donations and fosters, and offers help for pet-owners in need

To assist pet owners during the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis, Saint Frances Animal Center will distribute pet food to self-quarantined families in need of assistance. Thanks to the donations of countless individuals, the center has been able to deliver food to a dozen residents in Georgetown County who have been affected by the devastating COVID-19 pandemic so far.

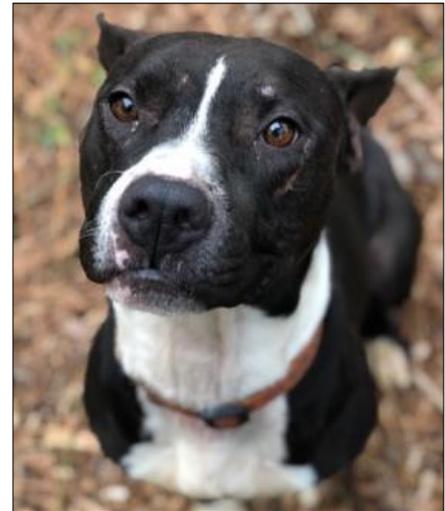
“Even though we are struggling to care for our shelter pets due to a dramatic decrease in donations, we know that others in our community need help due to self-quarantine requirements. We want to make sure no family worries about how to feed their beloved pet during this unprecedented crisis,” said Executive Director, Niki Dawson.

“Today, I spoke with a woman who’s elderly mom is very ill. She cannot leave her house due to potential exposure. She cried tears of relief when she found out that we would provide food for her cats,” said volunteer coordinator, Regina Paschal.

Added Dawson, “We are grateful to work with generous supporters who are helping us help our community. Across our county, people are turning to their pets for comfort, and with our food bank, we are committed to ... working to ensure their pets’ needs are met as we weather this crisis together.”

The center is asking the community to continue its ongoing support of the shelter during this critical time. The shelter needs donations of cat, dog and pocket pet food, which can be delivered to the facility at 125 North Ridge St. in Georgetown. Volunteers are also available to pick up donations depending on the location. In addition, the shelter is seeking temporary homes for its animals.

“Due to the closure of the facility to the public and volunteers, we are seeking emergency foster placement for shelter pets to reduce the workload for the staff,” said Dawson. “We’ve never needed the community



St. Frances Animal Center is looking for fosters for its adoptables, like Dan (left) and Diego, while the shelter is closed to the public during the COVID-19 crisis.

more than we do right now. Please consider quarantining with one of our Saints!”

For more information on the center’s efforts to help at-risk animals, please visit www.sfanimals.org.

Make sure your pets are ready for a quarantine

St. Frances wants to encourage families to plan ahead to keep you and your pets safe during the ongoing crisis, as well as any emergency that may arise in the future. Follow these tips to make an emergency plan for your pets:

Temporary Care:

Ask a friend, neighbor or family member to care for your pets if someone in your household becomes ill and/or is hospitalized. Consider researching boarding facilities. Remember, these may close if considered non-essential businesses.

Identification:

Be sure to keep your pet’s microchip regis-

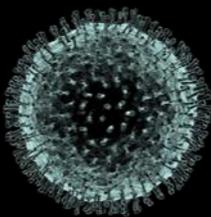
tration up to date with current contact information. Always keep collars on your pet with tags that have current phone numbers. Have a picture of your pet printed out and kept with your pets medical records.

Emergency kits (one for each pet)

Each kit should have the following:

- Two-week supply of food and water. Store in a water-tight container. Rotate food and water every three months to keep fresh.
- Food and water bowl
- Can opener
- One crate or temporary housing space per pet
- Medication with doses and directions
- Veterinary medical records (screenshot these using your cell phone)
- Carrier or leash for each pet
- Litter and litter box for cats
- Comfort items
- Cleaning items for pet (paper towels, scoop for litter box, cleaning spray)
- Pet first aid kit

Rumor has it...



Help healthcare and emergency management officials during the Coronavirus crisis by stopping rumors and only sharing information from trusted sources. Here are some trusted sources for factual information.



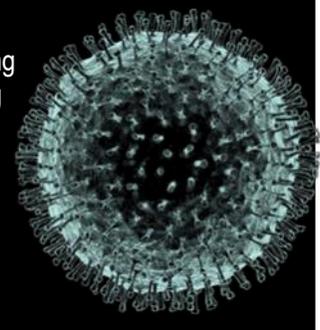
www.scemd.org



www.cdc.gov



www.who.int



News from our Veterans Affairs Officer

By David Murphy

Greetings, veterans.

Amid the growing concerns about the spread of **COVID-19**, the Georgetown Veterans Affairs office is restricting access to our office during this State of Emergency. At this time we will unfortunately not be able to conduct any walk-in or home visits.

If a veteran needs any help with their claims, the status of pending claims or appeals, please give us a call. Our office staff will do its best to process any claims or appeals via fax, e-mail or over the phone. Our office number is 843-545-3330 and my direct email is



Murphy

dmurphy@gtcounty.org. You may also access our Facebook page for any updates at facebook.com/gtcveterans. The County's main page at facebook.com/gtcountysc has frequent updates about the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

If you need to start a claim for benefits please use the e-benefits system. You can use this website to access e-benefits:

<https://www.ebenefits.va.gov>.

Thank you for your patience as we work through this State of Emergency!

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) Regional Offices are closed to the public as of March 19. Regional offices will remain open, but will no longer accept walk-ins for claims assistance, scheduled appointments, counseling and other in-person services. This decision protects our older veterans and those with underlying conditions, as well as our employees.

Veterans can continue to get information about benefits or file a claim for benefits by visiting our website at www.va.gov. Veterans with claims-specific or other questions may request information via the [Inquiry Routing & Information System \(IRIS\)](https://www.va.gov/iris) website or by telephone at 1-800-827-1000.

VBA benefits and services provided to veterans, families, and survivors will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of COVID-19 impacts.

Please continue to check www.va.gov for updates.

Some have raised questions and concerns about those that are homeless veterans. If you know of someone that is homeless, you may contact John Mention, SSVF Intake coordinator with ECHO at 843-213-8530 or email him at jmention@echomeless.org. Please be aware that due to a high number of calls it may be better if you e-mail him first.

The **Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center** and its clinics are striving to provide timely and accurate updates regarding COVID-19. As an extra precaution, patients and visitors are asked to be prepared to talk about recent travel and contact with others, and if you are experiencing symptoms such as fever, coughing or other cold symptoms when scheduling an appointment at the center or a VA outpatient clinic.

If you become sick, the Medical Center recommends that you do the following to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Stay home except to get medical care.
- Separate yourself from others in your home; if possible, use a separate bathroom.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor.

- Wear a facemask when around others and before you enter a healthcare providers office. Please note, masks are provided by the VA for individuals exhibiting flu-like symptoms. The VA does not provide masks to veterans or staff for home isolation or quarantine.

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue that you will immediately throw away.
- Clean your hands thoroughly and often.
- Rest and stay well-hydrated.
- Avoid sharing personal household items
- Clean "high-touch" surfaces daily.
- Monitor your symptoms; seek prompt medical attention if your illness is getting worse or you have trouble breathing or start to turn blue around the lips.

- Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider or the Telephone Advice line, 843-789-6500 or 1-888-878-6884 for instructions.

- Non-VA patients can visit MUSC Health virtual urgent care at <https://campaigns.muschealth.org/virtual-care/index.html>. MUSC is offering free consultations and screenings to anyone experiencing COVID-19-like symptoms located in South Carolina with the promo code COVID19 for both new and existing patients. Roper St. Francis Health is also offering free virtual care consultations and screenings to anyone experiencing COVID-19 symptoms in the Lowcountry at <https://www.rsfh.com/coronavirus>.

- If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify dispatch that you have COVID-19 and put on a facemask.

Follow these steps to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses:

- Veterans should register for [My HealthVet](https://www.va.gov/myhealthvet) and learn how to use VA Video Connect through the VA mobile app store or by contacting your VA care team before any urgent problem arises.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers work too, but should be at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw it away immediately after use.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick (use the 3-foot rule — stay at least 3 feet away from people who are sick. Six feet is better).
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth — germs often spread this way.
- Get your flu shot.

Please be safe and be careful.

David Murphy,
Manager,

Georgetown County Office of Veterans Affairs

Sign up for emergency alerts!

Don't miss out on important information that could keep you and your family safe. Sign up to receive emergency alerts specific to your address from the Georgetown County Emergency Management Division via email or phone. Sign up for this free service at www.gtcounty.org or call (843) 545-3213.

Georgetown County, South Carolina County Government

Numbers to know

Animal Control, 546-5101

Assessor, 545-3014

Auditor, 545-3021

Clerk of Court, 545-3004

County Council, 545-3058

Coroner, 546-3056

Elections, 545-3339

Finance, 545-3002

Planning and Zoning, 545-3116

Probate Judge, 545-3077

Register of Deeds, 545-3088

Sheriff, 546-5102

Treasurer, 545-3098

P.O. Box 421270
129 Screven Street
Georgetown, S.C. 29440-4200

Phone: (843) 545-3063
Fax: (843) 545-3292



Best wishes, Sel!

There are very few people who have made as much of an impact on Georgetown County as Sel Hemingway.

Following in his father's footsteps, he represented District 5 on County Council for 11 years and served as Council Chairman for seven of those years. In 2008, he was hired as County Administrator. Under his leadership, the County completed a long-range Capital Improvement Plan, implemented its first Capital Project Sales Tax and developed a national reputation as a destination for tournaments and recreational tourism. It renovated the historic courthouse on Screven Street, built a new judicial center to house court operations, and opened new libraries, recreation facilities and playing fields. It hosted two Bassmaster Elite Series tournaments, generating millions of dollars in revenue for local businesses and implemented impact fees to help ensure new development pays for itself instead of putting the burden on existing residents.

He also saw the county through hurricanes, ice storms and historic flooding.

This is among other achievements too numerous to mention. For his contributions, the Chamber of Commerce presented him with a Lifetime of Achievement Award in November.

There are few people who have as much knowledge about Georgetown County as Hemingway and his love for the county where he has spent his life is obvious. He makes a pileau like nobody else (except maybe the Sheriff's Office), and has ice cream making skills worth mentioning too. And his Forest Gump impersonation is unforgettable.

Hemingway retired on Feb. 29 and joked at his retirement party on Feb. 23 that it felt like he was attending his own funeral. It was a packed house and nearly everyone had some story or



Sel Hemingway is pictured at his retirement party with a surprise guest, Clemson's mascot. Hemingway is well known for being a huge Tigers fan.

happy memory of Hemingway to share. It was all a testament to the contributions and sacrifices he made on the county's behalf over more than two decades. Hemingway himself has a reputation as a master storyteller, and had some stories of his own to tell.

Even if it might have sounded something like a eulogy, Georgetown County isn't telling Hemingway goodbye — just see you soon. We know he can't sit still for long, and he's already promised to drop in at his old stomping grounds from time to time. He took a part-time job with Congressman Tom Rice's office as something of a community liaison that will give him plenty of excuses to do just that.

So even as we prepare to welcome a new Administrator and look forward to working with and getting to know her, we're not quite closing the book with Mr. Hemingway yet. Just starting a new chapter and wishing him well in his well-deserved semi-retirement. If he gets bored, we have plenty of boards and commissions he can serve on, and we're sure future fishing tournaments will offer many volunteer opportunities!

County recognizes longtime employees



Georgetown County recently recognized employees who celebrated milestone anniversaries in 2019. At left, Sheila Sullivan, of the Library receives an award from then-County Administrator Sel Hemingway. Sullivan celebrated 45 years. Pictured at Center are employees recognized for 35 years, Doug Gainey of MIS and Sanda Carter of Building. At right are employees recognized for 30 years. They are Joey Manigault of Parks and Recreation, Myra McGirt of the Detention Center and Mack Reed of County Fire/EMS.