



The Georgetown County Chronicle



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

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Calendar

June 18 – Georgetown County Planning Commission Meeting, 5:30 p.m., Howard Auditorium.

June 19 – Blood Drive at Howard Auditorium, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. See page 6.

June 23 – Georgetown County Council Meeting (includes budget hearing), 5:30 p.m., Howard Auditorium.

June 26 – Last day to register for Youth Track and Field program. See page 8.

July 1 – New fiscal year begins.

July 3 – Georgetown County offices and facilities are closed for observance of the Independence Day holiday. View a complete list of county holidays for the upcoming fiscal year at gctcounty.org.

Volume 8, Issue 9

June 2020

County offices open on a limited basis following COVID closure



Georgetown County Library branches eased back into reopening in late May by offering curbside book delivery. Branches resumed allowing access to the circulation desk on June 1 and limited access to adult computer areas on June 15. Plans are to add access to adult book shelves and seating areas on June 29. Access to children's areas is expected to resume July 13. Appropriate facial coverings are required to enter the library.

As of June 1, nearly all county facilities have reopened to the public following closures in mid-March due to COVID-19. However, restrictions remain in place for the health and safety of county staff and members of the public.

After being closed for a full two months, all buildings except recreational facilities and libraries opened their doors May 18 on an appointment-only basis. Recreational facilities reopened June 1 when restrictions from the state were relaxed. Libraries, which began offering contactless curbside delivery of materials May 18, began allowing some access to circulation desks and adult computer areas this month.

The county also resumed having in-person meetings of public bodies, including County Council. Council had its first in-person meeting since March on May 26. The meeting was moved to Howard Auditorium to better allow for social distancing

Overwhelmingly, the appointment-only system has worked well across county departments. When county buildings closed to the public on March 18, county staff was able to handle nearly all public business via e-mail, phone and dropboxes. Many residents found it convenient, and appreciated being saved a trip.

The county continues to handle as much business as possible online and via phone. For matters that can't be handled electronically, residents schedule a time to come in. Those entering are strongly encouraged to wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth. Staff members working with the public are also wearing masks, and plastic barriers have been installed for extra protection in areas where work stations cannot be spread out and where staff works face-to-face with customers.

The main entrance at the historic courthouse was also temporarily

See "Reopening," Page 10

Parks staff works to 'Reimagine Recreation'

While every county department has been impacted by the new coronavirus, Parks and Recreation is perhaps the most changed in a post-COVID-19 world. Health guidelines and state regulations on sports and recreational facilities mean fewer people can participate in activities — if they choose to participate at all once informed of the restrictions and requirements.

The situation has left staff members looking for innovative ways to continue providing services to keep residents active and engaged.

"We're working to reimagine recreation," said Beth Goodale, department director. Since the county declared a State of Emergency surrounding COVID-19 in March, closing facilities for two months, the department has been creating comprehensive virtual programming — and continues to do so.

Virtual programming "has a wide focus including traditional exercise and fitness along with crafts, history and other programs of interest to a varied audience," Goodale explained.

Recreational staff are also

See "Parks & Rec.," Page 7

County Administrator lays out \$87.6 million no frills FY21 budget

After much work and thoughtful effort from our Finance staff, and staff across all county departments, I am delighted to present a balanced budget of \$87,571,000 for the 2021 Fiscal Year. As you know, our annual budget provides the funds that make possible all the programs and services that Georgetown County government provides to residents on a daily basis. These programs and services are an integral component to the quality of life we all enjoy here in Georgetown County. Despite the hurdles 2020 has thrown at us, Georgetown County aims to maintain the high quality of its services in the upcoming fiscal year. This document provides the details of those services and their funding, line by line.



By **Angela Christian**
County
Administrator

This budget represents the work of all departments bringing forth a financial plan that meets our core needs. Revenues and expenditures have been conservatively projected as we – like communities across the nation – witnessed an almost total standstill of the economy in February, March and April due to a global pandemic. Finally, this budget provides a balanced approach for our diverse and dynamic community amidst the uncertainty of a sputtering economy.

Even as recently as December, we never could have imagined the challenges 2020 would bring to Georgetown County and communities from one side of the globe to the other. In addition to the physical and emotional tolls the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on us as a people, it has also dealt a terrible economic blow. Added to that, we now witness unrest nightly on the news and in communities across the United States and around the world. We don't yet know what the final impacts of these events will be.

A resident recently asked me, "When will things return to normal?" I gave the only answer I could. While standing the required six feet away and with a mask covering my nose and mouth, I said "This may be our normal now." With statewide stay-at-home orders for nonessential businesses and lack of tourism dollars flowing into our county in March and April, we experienced a significant loss of revenues this spring. While

some of that has started to turn around with the lifting and relaxing of orders from the state, we don't know how long a complete recovery will take. Unemployment is estimated at 14% for our area. We are hopeful that the federal stimulus buffers the loss of income for businesses and individuals, and eases the economic damage. Meanwhile, the number of COVID-19 cases in the state continues to rise and officials have warned to prepare for a second outbreak in the fall. We have estimated no growth in revenues for FY20 and restrained spending in the last quarter of the year.

As you'll see in the budget document, we have maintained a countywide millage rate of 63.8. For the average resident, that represents \$255 in taxes on a \$100,000 fair market value home. The debt service funding of the latest general obligation bond in December 2019 is included, along with adjustments in the General and Law Enforcement Funds to more clearly reflect law enforcement revenues and expenditures.

Overall the budget is down, 3.2%. With an abbreviated budget process, there are no frills, no cost of living raises for employees, no new positions and limited capital equipment added. As we move forward in future years, there may be fewer capital replacements and longer replacement schedules due to smaller contributions to prefund capital replacement. The proposed budget does fund increased contributions for health insurance and retirement contributions. Staff will continue to explore additional options to stabilize health expenditures. Other significant expenditures include Worker's Compensation, Building and Content, Fleet and Tort Liability insurances. We have very limited control over increases in most of those expenditures.

We anticipate growth in our property assessment of 1.78%, but lower rates of collection for property tax-

es. Again, a possible resurgence of COVID-19 in the fall could create additional hurdles from a budget standpoint.

In conclusion, County staff has been careful and deliberate in its projections. We believe our budget plans represent a shift in philosophy to meet uncertain times, and flexibility to respond to whatever the coming months may bring.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all the county's Elected Officials and Department Directors for their cooperation during a trying transitional period, and in putting the budget together quickly. Special recognition is due to Finance Director Ed Kilcullen and Budget Analyst Karis Langston. I look forward to working with the entire Georgetown County team to find solutions to our collective challenges and move Georgetown County forward.

Copies of the budget are available at gtcounty.org/finance for public review. A public hearing on the budget will take place during the June 23 County Council meeting, which will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Howard Auditorium, 1610 Hawkins St., Georgetown.

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 social media accounts. 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

Scammers using judge's name to coerce money from victims

First they used the names of local law enforcement officers. Now phone scammers are also using the name of a local judge in their efforts to con local residents out of their money, the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office has warned.

In this newest scam making the rounds, the caller uses a judge's name to make false claims intended to frighten people into paying them. In a previous iteration, the scammers claimed to be Sheriff's deputies with a warrant for the arrest of someone in the household. The caller ID was even spoofed to display the phone number for the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office.

In both versions of the scam, the caller tries to intimidate people into purchasing gift cards to pay the debt the victim supposedly owes. That's a sure sign of a scam, according to the Sheriff's Office. The Georgetown County Sheriff's Office nor any judge will never call people asking for money to pay off a warrant — and especially not with gift cards.

Anyone contacted by people perpetuating this scam is asked to report it to the Sheriff's Office by calling (843) 546-5102. Anyone with information about scams or other crimes can send an anonymous tip to the Sheriff's Office by sending a text message to 274637. Include the word "GCSOTIP" in the message.

Georgetown, Murrells Inlet fireworks displays cancelled

Fourth of July fireworks displays that normally take place in the City of Georgetown and Murrells Inlet won't happen this Independence Day. The change is a result of COVID-19 and concerns about potential spread of the virus due to the large crowds the fireworks shows attract on the Georgetown Harborwalk and the Murrells Inlet Marsh Walk.

The Murrells Inlet show has been postponed until Labor Day weekend, the Marsh Walk Group announced on June 2. The group is comprised of the seven Marsh Walk restaurants that host the show every year.

The City of Georgetown cancelled its show outright, but said it might have a fireworks show on New Year's Eve instead if the current public health crisis subsides enough to allow it.

Georgetown County has seen increased spread of COVID-19 during the first half of June, with more cases reported in those two weeks than all of March, April and May combined. Over the 10-day period of June 7-16, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control reported 118 new cases in Georgetown County.

It will be a little different this year, but

Summer Reading is on!

This year's youth summer reading program will feature online storytimes, plays, nature and science; activity and craft packets to take home; outside special events and crafts, and more!

Call you local branch to get your child signed up!

- Georgetown: (843) 545-3311
- Waccamaw: (843) 545-3349
- Andrews: (843) 545-3621
- Carvers Bay: (843) 545-3515



GEORGETOWN
Farmers Market

SATURDAYS 8AM-1PM
MAY 23 THRU OCT 24
122 SCREVEN STREET
DOWNTOWN

WWW.WACCAMAWMARKETS.ORG




Primary voters choose presumptive winners for county offices

Miriam Mace will be the next Georgetown County Treasurer and Chase Ridgeway will be the new County Coroner based on results from the June 9 Republican Primary Election.

Though there is still the possibility of a successful write-in campaign for either race in November, the candidates will be the only ones to appear on the ballot in their respective races in the general election, making them the presumptive victors.

Election results were certified June 11 by the County Elections board.

The statewide primaries saw a surprising voter turnout of 30 percent in Georgetown County — more than double that of the primaries in 2016 and 2012. With high absentee numbers recorded prior to June 9, officials anticipated light turnout at the polls. However, polls across the county reported a steady turnout throughout the day. In total, 13,328 of the county's 44,449 registered voters turned out, with 7,867 voting in the Republican Primary and 5,461 voting in the Democratic Primary.

Mace, an employee in the county Assessor's Office and a former employee of the Auditor's Office, won 4,015 to 3,656 against incumbent Allison Peteet, who is in her first term as Treasurer. Unlike most elected offices, the term for the county Treasurer and Auditor end with the fiscal year, so Mace will take office July 1, 2021.



Mace

That's also the day that Ken Baker, another employee of the Assessor's Office, will take office as the new County Auditor. Current Auditor Brian Shult chose not to seek re-election. Baker was unchallenged in the Primary, so will be the only name on the ballot for his race in November.

All other newly elected officials will be sworn in in January 2021.

One of the most talked about races of this election cycle was the one to see who would replace retiring Coroner Kenny Johnson. Chase Ridgeway, a deputy coroner, won the seat 5,103 to 2,506 against Allen Morris, a criminal investigator.

Also in the Republican Primary, longtime County Council District 2 incumbent Ron Charlton lost to former District 6 Council Member Bob Anderson by just 22 votes. A difference of one vote fewer would have required a mandatory recount according to state law. Charlton has contested the results after reports that some voters received the wrong ballot. Voters in Council Districts 6 and 7 reported the District 2 race was on their ballot, while some District 2 residents said they did not have the race on their ballots. The Republican Party will have to approve Charlton's challenge of the results for it to move forward. Charlton has represented District 2 for 24 years. Anderson served District 6 from 2011-14.

On the Democratic ballot, Council District



Ridgeway

3 representative Everett Carolina Sr. was re-elected 660-603 over former District 3 representative Leona "Tiger" Miller. Miller

addressed the Elections Board on June 17 and has [formally asked for an investigation](#) into the election and violation of ethics laws she alleged by Carolina. She also challenged write-in ballots as well as absentee ballots. The board has not yet responded.

There will be no challenger on the ballot in November for Council District 2 or 3.

Other officials who will appear unopposed on the November ballot, and who did not have an opponent in the

Primary elections are: County Council District 4 representative Lillie Jean Johnson and District 5 representative Raymond Newton, Probate Judge Leigh Boan and Clerk of Court Alma White.

Sheriff Carter Weaver was unchallenged in the Republican Primary, but will face Democrat Birt Adams on the ballot in November.

For full results from the June 9 elections, or for information about the upcoming general election, including how to register to vote and important upcoming dates in this election cycle, visit gtcounty.org/elections or scvotes.org.



Anderson



Charlton

Georgetown named finalist for nation's Best Coastal Small Town

Once again, the City of Georgetown is in the running to be named USA Today's Best Coastal Small Town, and it needs your vote to win.

After winning the competition in 2018 and finishing fourth in 2019, Georgetown was announced this month as one of 20 finalists for USA Today's list of 10 Best Coastal Small Towns for 2020.

"We are just so thrilled that Georgetown is again one of 20 nominees for the Best Coastal Small Town award," said Mark A. Stevens, director of tourism development for the Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce. "Georgetown is the quintessential American

small town. Our community is tight-knit, rich with history, and offers vacationers easy access to an abundance of outdoor activities, including the nearby Atlantic Ocean."

To qualify, small towns must have fewer than 25,000 people as of the last census with uncrowded beaches.

The voting period lasts until Monday, June 29 at noon. Winners will be announced on Friday, July 10.

Anyone can vote in the competition, and individuals are allowed to vote daily until the competition ends. Vote at <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-coastal-small-town/>.



The Georgetown Harborwalk .

Midway Fire Rescue warns of dangers of digging on the beach

Digging holes in the sand seems to be a favorite pastime for many beachgoers. And it's not just for kids with plastic shovels; some adults spend hours digging holes that could fit a small car.

It's a behavior that baffles some, while others find it great fun. It's not illegal, but it can be very dangerous for those digging, as well as others on the beach, including people and animals, according to first responders with Midway Fire Rescue.

Here are some of the dangers that come with digging large holes on the beach:

- **They can cave in.** Over the past few years there have been incidents in which holes dug in the sand have suddenly collapsed on the people inside. These accidents caused serious injuries, and some have even proven fatal. Once a hole in the sand gets more than a few feet deep, the walls of the hole can easily cave in. With that said, it's best to avoid digging holes altogether, but if you just have to dig, keep them shallow.

- **They have the potential to cause injury to unsuspecting beachgoers.** Those who are walking or running on the beach do not expect to come across large holes in the sand when enjoying the area. These unexpected holes can cause injuries to anyone who may fall into them or place their foot near the edge (remember how easily that sand can cave in?). These holes can be missed during the day and are almost impossible to see at night. Don't let your idea of fun at the beach cause someone else a twisted ankle, broken bone or worse!

- **They make beaches less navigable for emergency response.** Just as you don't want to be the cause of someone else's injury, you don't want to be the reason someone experiencing an emer-



gency on the beach can't receive help in time. Large holes dug in the sand make it more difficult than necessary for law enforcement, emergency medical services staff and other first responders and their vehicles to get to their destination quickly and safely. When beachgoers dig large holes in the sand, they create dangerous obstacles that those who patrol the beach on four-wheelers and other off-road vehicles must navigate around. This cannot only slow vehicles down when responding to emergencies, but also creates a major hazard for these vehicles as well.

- **They're a danger to wildlife and pets:** Various species of endangered sea turtles, including the Loggerhead sea turtle, crawl onto local beaches to nest during the summer months. Additionally, once their eggs hatch, tiny baby sea turtles have to navigate the beach and its many predators to get back to the ocean. Holes on the beach — for hatchlings, even very small ones — can trap these animals, leading to their death. This is not to mention the danger posed to dogs and other animals on the beach.

Please don't dig on the beach, but if you do, make sure to fill in any holes completely before you leave, and especially make sure they are filled in before dark.



For the protection
of our sea turtles &
other wildlife please

LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS



All items must be picked up off the beach at the day's end, including chairs, tents, toys and, of course, any food packaging or other litter. Litter laws are strictly enforced.

Any items left on the beach at the end of the day are considered abandoned and may be removed.



LIGHTS OUT! SEA TURTLES DIG THE DARK

- Turn out beachfront lights after dusk
- Close blinds, curtains in beachfront homes
- Do not disturb nesting females or hatchlings by using flashlights, flash photography or lanterns at night
- Fill in any holes in the sand at day's end



See more local beach regulations at www.gtcparks.org



BEACH DAYS GONE BY



Georgetown County Digital Library

One never knows what kinds of treasures from the past will be uncovered when looking through Georgetown County's Digital Library. Take for example this old photo of Wentworth Ford enjoying a day on Pawleys Island with two young ladies. This swimsuit fashions alone make this photo worth sharing. Find more local photos from our county's history at gcdigital.org.

Southern Light at Brookgreen Gardens



Now through Sept. 12, Brookgreen Gardens is hosting a special immersive art and lights show, featuring seven works by internationally known artist Bruce Munroe. The exhibit is open Wednesdays through Saturdays from 8-11 p.m. Learn more at brookgreen.org.



MAKE YOUR FAMILY COUNT

Even the grouches!

www.2020census.gov






#EvenTheGrouches
Gtcounty.org/census

BLOOD DONORS ARE LIFE-SAVERS.

SAVE A LIFE, GIVE BLOOD.

Introducing COVID-19 Antibody Screening:

For a limited time, the American Red Cross will test all blood donations for COVID-19 antibodies as an additional health service to donors. Testing will provide critical insight into whether donors may have been exposed to COVID-19, even if they did not display symptoms. This screening does NOT diagnose illness, including COVID-19. If you feel unwell, please don't donate. Individuals who believe they may be ill with COVID-19 should not donate until they are symptom free for 28 days and feeling well.

#GtCountyCares



Upcoming Georgetown County-Sponsored Blood Drives:

- Friday, June 19
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
at Howard Rec.Center,
1610 Hawkins St.,
Georgetown
- Wednesday, June 24
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
at Waccamaw Regional
Rec. Center,
83 Duncan Ave,
Pawleys Island
- Thursday, July 23
Noon to 5 p.m.
at Waccamaw Library,
41 St. Paul Place,
Pawleys Island

While appointments are not required, they are recommended. Schedule your appointment or learn more at redcrossblood.org.




Andrews Rec. Center opens without fanfare during COVID-19

Other capital, improvement projects progressing during pandemic

When Georgetown County reopened regional recreation centers on June 1, there was a new addition among them. The long-awaited new Andrews Regional Recreation Center was finished in May, while county facilities were closed to the public due to COVID-19.

With remaining restrictions on large gatherings, the facility opened quietly, but visitors have been trickling in to have a look and start putting it to use (see accompanying article for operating hours and other details for use). Plans are to have a belated ribbon cutting and dedication when conditions allow. In the meantime, staff is putting together a virtual tour of the facility.

Significant progress has also been made on the construction of a new track and fields at Beck Recreation Center. Substantial completion of the project is expected within 60 days.

Final documents have also been submitted to the state for generator improvement grant funding, which will allow the addition of generators at Beck, Waccamaw Regional Recreation Center and the Murrells Inlet Community Center. The addition of generators at these locations will enable the county to use the facilities for potential disaster response and recovery operations.

Also in Murrells Inlet, Parks and Recreation staff are working with the Surfrider Foundation on installation of a working rain garden at Morse Park. The Surfrider Foundation is also assisting staff with enhancing access to county beaches through funding of beach access improvements.

Lastly, the Waverly Park baseball and softball complex, adjacent to Waccamaw Elementary School, is entering the final stages of design and engineering. The complex will contain a four-field wagon wheel with individual scoring stands and a building for restrooms and concessions.

Look for updates on our website, social media and in our next newsletter.

Parks and Rec.

Continued from Front Page

exploring opportunities to partner with the county's libraries and other potential programming partners.

Virtual programming is offered across the department's social media accounts, as well as at gtcparks.org.

Limited Reopening:

The loosening of state restrictions on public recreation facilities on June 1 allowed Georgetown County Parks and Recreation to begin reopening some of its facilities to the public – with stringent requirements for social distancing and sanitization. Phase 1 of reopening included limited reopening and resumption of limited programming at the county's four regional recreation centers and the Waccamaw Regional Tennis Center at Stables Park.

Regional recreation centers are open with modified hours: 7 a.m. to noon and 2-7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7 a.m. to noon on Fridays. Hours for the Tennis Center are 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4-8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and until 7 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. The Center is open from noon to 6 p.m. on Sundays. All individuals entering these facilities, including staff, must allow a temperature screening for admittance.

At the Regional Recreation Centers, cardio/weight room use is permitted on an advance reservation basis. Beginning at 7 a.m., 45-minute sessions are scheduled each hour with cleaning of equipment taking place after each session. Exercise classes, walking and other scheduled programs resumed with a maximum of 10 people per session and advance registration required. There is no locker room or shower access.

Sports Programming:

Close contact sports, including pickleball and basketball, along with event rentals remain prohibited at this time, but the department will offer a socially-distanced youth track and field program beginning June 29. Registration is open through June 26 and cost is \$10 per participant.

Additionally, local travel baseball and softball programs have started — with strict adherence to capacity restrictions and other state requirements.

Programming and schedules for facilities

and programs are posted outside regional recreation centers, as well as at gtcparks.org and on the department's social media pages as new programs are scheduled.

Aging Services:

Meal programs for senior citizens continue to be offered at their homes. The department's Aging Services Division continues to deliver more than 3,000 meals per week to county seniors. A recent donation allowed expansion of the meal delivery service and eliminated a waiting list for the service.

Tennis Center:

At the Waccamaw Regional Tennis Center, capacity is limited to 50 percent per state guidelines, with a maximum of four people per court (including the instructor) for doubles play and instructional sessions. Access to the pro shop is limited and there is no access to showers, ice machines or water fountains. Players should bring their own water. Advance registration is required for all play and programming.

"We understand that this may be inconvenient for some, but hope that everyone will cooperate and embrace our new procedures in our effort to open safely and effectively for our community and staff," said David Bromberg, who heads the county's tennis program. "Rest assured that our daily operations will be constantly evaluated, and that we will be making recommendations on the safe expansion of operations over time."

Courts may be reserved in 90-minute blocks. Players are asked not to arrive more than 15 minutes prior to their reservation time, and should not loiter after their session. All players and staff should enter through the North gate (to the right if facing the building), and exit through the South gate (to the left if facing the backside building). Further details are available at gtcparks.org.

State restrictions allowed athletic fields, including 8 Oaks Park, to begin reopening for practices on May 31 and resume games on June 15. Strict guidance, including capacity, distancing and sanitation restrictions apply to all field use. Advance registration is also required so that capacity limitations may be ensured.

For more information, visit gtcparks.org, or call your local recreation center.

Residents, groups asked to help encourage local census participation

Most Americans know what the census is in broad terms – a national population count that occurs every 10 years. But there’s a disconnect that seems to occur for many people when it comes to relating that count to their daily life and the direct impact it has on individuals, families and communities across the country, said S.C. Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette.



Evette

“I really believe there isn’t a person who wouldn’t fill it out if they really knew the benefits that come to their area when they do,” she told about two dozen Georgetown County leaders during a meeting at Howard Auditorium on June 12. Evette attended virtually to talk with leaders about how the county and its municipalities can increase their struggling response rate.

Census numbers determine how counties and cities are represented in local, state and federal government (the District 7 Congressional seat currently held by Rep. Tom Rice was created based on population increases reflected in the 2010 census). And those numbers also determine how big a share of federal funding counties and cities receive

for things like education, programs for the elderly, roads, disaster relief, and the CARES Act funding that was allocated for local governments, public health and small businesses.

“We can’t go back and change what happened” in the 2010 census, Evette said. It’s estimated that South Carolina’s population was undercounted by about 20% then.

“I really believe there isn’t a person who wouldn’t fill it out if they really knew the benefits that come to their area when they do.”

— Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette

“But we can do better going forward on the numbers that we collect now through Oct. 31,” the last day to fill out the 2020 census.

According to Evette, the state receives about \$3,000 in funding for every person who gets counted in the census. “Well, if 100 people do not fill out the census, over 10 years the state loses \$3 million on those hundred people.”

As of June 15, the statewide census re-

sponse rate was 56%, putting S.C. in 42nd place nationally. Georgetown County’s response rate was 44.5%, putting it in 42nd place in the state. Only Clarendon, Dillon, Allendale and Hampton counties ranked lower.

The City of Georgetown is in just slightly better shape with a 47% response rate. The Town of Andrews had a 39% response rate, while the Town of Pawleys Island had just 9%.

“South Carolina needs to be on the top of this national ranking list, because it’s good for our people and it’s good for every single community we have and the needs we face,” Evette said.

County and municipal leaders, along with representatives from local churches, the Frances P. Bunnelle Foundation, the United Way, the NAACP and others, pledged to do all they can to encourage census participation across all areas of the county. Special recognition was given to the Georgetown Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for going above and beyond already in their census efforts.

For more information about how to complete the 2020 census, resources to help encourage others to be counted, and video from the meeting with Evette, visit gtcounty.org/census.

Videos highlight projects at S. Island Ferry boat landing, Sandy Island

Among additions to Georgetown County’s YouTube channel this month were updates on two important capital projects: long-awaited improvements at the popular South Island Ferry Landing and a project to help prevent erosion on Sandy Island.

The videos are available to watch at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydx67xhl>.

A series of videos on the 2020 census were also added this month. Additionally, Georgetown County Council meetings are livestreamed and archived on the County’s YouTube channel. Residents are encouraged to subscribe to the channel so they never miss an update.

The county’s Parks and Recreation Department, along with the Georgetown County Library system also have YouTube channels, which people can locate via links on the county’s main channel.



Open to ages 4-12, \$10 per child

Registration is open until June 26

Practices begin June 29 and are held on Monday/Wednesday afternoons at Stables Park, Georgetown High, Andrews Rec.

Center and Choppee Rec. Center.

Competitions will be at the county high schools — Schedule TBA.

Volunteer coaches needed!

**More information and registration at gtcparks.org
or call (843) 545-3275**

Public Works employees receive departmental awards for excellence

During a celebration of National Public Works Week, the Georgetown County Public Services Department recognized three outstanding employees with awards. Employees receiving recognition are as follows:

- **Roselind Snow**, a recycling center attendant, received the Leadership Award for her exemplary service. She has been employed with the Public Works Department since 2016, and her supervisor frequently receives positive feedback from the public about Snow's friendliness and willingness to assist taxpayers. Because of her strong work ethic, efficiency and incredible customer service, new employees are typically sent to Snow's site for training and guidance.



Snow

"She is always willing to pick up an extra shift if there are last minute callouts by other staff," Tracy Jones, who chaired the awards committee, said of Snow. "Recently, during a construction project at another site, she was called in to assist with traffic control and provided leadership and direction to other staff members onsite. Roselind is the epitome of how to lead through example."

- **Tommy Bracey**, a tradesman, received the Team Player Award, because he "exemplifies the idea of a strong team player," Jones said. Bracey was recognized for

always putting an emphasis on team work. He was described as a jack of all trades, who is always willing to help his colleagues.

"Whenever there is a task, whether it is simple or really difficult, he is ready to jump in and tackle it head on," Jones said. "He always has a can-do attitude and has the energy to support it. He is always making us smile and finds ways to make us laugh on the job." She said he is also known for his willingness to answer questions from staff and citizens with patience and a great attitude.



Bracey

All these qualities help his team work smarter, faster and with great efficiency.

- **Janet Combs**, administrative assistant to department director Ray Funnye, received the Green Earth Award. The award criteria were influenced this year by COVID-19.

"COVID -19 forced Public Services to be creative, intuitive and efficient through these Georgetown County Government unprecedented times," Jones said in presenting the award.

The Awards Committee "felt that Janet helped the Department through this crisis by being supportive electronically, and connected all of us virtually. To us, this is environmental awareness and her continued dedication to the Department as a whole to

stay electronically connected truly supported the team functions."

Combs routinely encourages others to use alternative ways to achieve tasks that use less paper. She finds ways for other staff to work together across different Divisions in order to get work done." In addition to the award presentations, the ceremony highlighted the hard work and importance of the entire Public Works profession, and emphasized that Public Works employees are first responders.



Combs

"The fact is, all of our lives are touched by employees in Public Works," said County Administrator Angela Christian.

"Throughout this pandemic, Public Works employees have remained on the job as essential personnel."

"Many a time, during a sudden rainstorm, I have personally called on our heavy equipment operators at home to come back to work to clear debris, remove trees from roads, and assist citizens whose roads have flash-flooded out," said Ray Funnye, director of Georgetown County Public Services, which houses the Public Works Division.

"And when we're in a crisis situation—such as a hurricane or flood—Public Works is at the forefront, among the first on the scene and the last to leave."

Campbell Marine Complex hosts 'socially distanced' redfish tournament

Georgetown County Parks and Recreation hosted the IFA Redfish Tour and Kayak Tour at its Carroll Ashmore Campbell Marine Complex on June 6 and 7. The tournaments were originally scheduled to take place this spring, but were delayed due to COVID-19.

There were no spectators allowed for the tournament and social distancing between teams was strictly enforced.

Bruce Gallop of Pawleys Island and Jack Smith of Georgetown won the Redfish Tour, beating out 54 other teams with a 9.04-pound aggregate weight. The two won a fully-rigged Ranger RB190 boat package.

Steve Yurkevicius won the Kayak Tour and \$2,300 with a 17.75-inch trout and a 28.63-inch redfish.

The tournaments had an estimated economic impact on the county of \$113,600.

The Parks and Recreation Dept. has also been asked to host tournaments for Conway and Pee Dee Bassmasters groups at the Campbell Marine Complex this month due to flooding further north.

Residents asked to participate in survey re. Rocky Point Forest

Georgetown County Parks and Recreation is working with the Winyah Rivers Foundation and the Open Space Institute on future planning initiatives for Rocky Point Community Forest. Input from the public is being sought as planning moves forward.

The survey covers issues and concerns residents have noted in regard to the property, priorities for the property's future, as well as activities and amenities they would like to see added at Rocky Point. The survey is located at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf0R_HwS484ir2WAjECHM8bqvYRuGRHL_BnNN76PCmRPCOu2g/viewform?usp=sf_link.

Input from the survey will be provided to National Park Services representatives providing planning assistance and advice for use of the property. A public presentation will also take place when social distancing restrictions permit.

Reopening

Continued from Front Page

moved from Screven Street to Prince Street to better allow for social distancing. The public must now enter directly in front of the Treasurer's Office, where the entryway is wider. This offers increased safety for the public, as well as the Sheriff's deputies who provide security at the entrance. The staff parking area directly in front of the Prince Street entrance has been turned into a public wheelchair-accessible parking area.

Further guidelines for individual departments during this first phase of reopening are as follows:

Assessor's Office: Legal Residence applications may be downloaded online. Completed applications may be submitted by mail, fax or email, or may be placed in the dropbox inside the entrance of the historic courthouse. To register a mobile home, please call the Assessor's Office to verify the requirements for completing the registration process. Information may be submitted via mail, email or fax, or placed in the dropbox inside the entrance of the historic courthouse. Otherwise, please call to make an appointment.

Auditor's Office: All personal interaction with taxpayers will be based on previously scheduled appointments. Homestead appointments commenced on May 20 and extend at a rate of three per day until Sept. 25. All appointments for other purposes must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Appointments will be scheduled in 15-minute intervals, with a maximum of three taxpayers permitted in the office at any one time. In the event there is a back-up, floor tape has been applied in six-foot increments in the hallway. Accommodations will be made to assist taxpayers who need to deal with other departments to complete their paperwork.

Building Department: All permit forms are available on the [department webpage](#). Credit card payments may be made by calling (843) 545-3116. Checks may be mailed to 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.

County Council: Georgetown County Council resumed in-person meetings on May 26. Council meetings begin at 5:30 p.m. The location for meetings been moved from

Council Chambers to Howard Auditorium (1610 Hawkins St., Georgetown) until further notice to allow for proper social distancing. Members of the public choosing to attend council meetings are strongly encouraged to wear masks that cover the nose and mouth for the safety of other attendees, as well as county staff and council. Residents wishing to address Council during Public Comment periods should sign up in advance of the meeting via the online form at gtcounty.org, or by calling (843) 545-3058. Meetings are livestreamed on Georgetown County's YouTube channel.

Courts: Trials continue to be suspended. Non-jury hearings for Family Court, DSS Child Support negotiations, DSS and Clerk's contempt of court hearings, juvenile hearings, worker's compensation hearings, Master-in-Equity hearings, Probate Court hearings, Common Pleas Court mediations and arbitration hearings, and depositions have resumed.

Libraries: On May 18, Georgetown County library branches began offering curbside, contactless delivery of library materials. Library users may order books online or via phone. Users will be notified by library staff when their order is ready, and the order may be picked up during operating hours. Library staff will carry the order out to the patron's vehicle and place it in the trunk. Limited admittance to the circulation desk and adult computer areas is allowed for patrons wearing a mask. Access to adult book shelves and seating areas is scheduled to resume June 29, and access to the children's areas is expected to resume July 13.

Planning and Zoning: All permit forms are available on the department [webpage](#). Credit card payments may be made by calling (843) 545-3158. Checks may be mailed to P.O. Drawer 421270, Georgetown, SC, 29442. For assistance, or if you are unable to access our permits online, please

contact the Planning Department at (843) 545-3158.

Register of Deeds: Those who need to have documents recorded are asked to use the dropbox in the lobby of the historic courthouse. Documents presented in person must be presented at the window at the office entrance. The Register of Deeds office will continue to operate on the appointment system that went into effect on March 18. Paralegals will be admitted to the Record Room by appointment only, with entry limited to three people at a time. Appointments will be in 4-hour increments: 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 time. Documents may be left in the dropbox at the courthouse entrance. All documents should be in a marked envelope with clear directions for where and who it should be directed. Items dropped off without a paralegal's name on them will be recorded upon receipt.

Treasurer's Office: A station has been set up for customers to put payments in envelopes and place them in a secure dropbox in lieu of waiting in line and having face-to-face interaction with a cashier. Receipts may be retrieved online or mailed upon request.

Veterans Affairs: Due to the small size of the lobby, visitors are asked to wait outside if the lobby is already occupied in order to maintain proper social distancing.



News from our Veterans Affairs Officer

By David Murphy

Greetings to all our veterans!

On June 14, the U. S. Army celebrated its 245th birthday. Let's give a big happy birthday salute and thanks to all our soldiers!

After being closed for two months due to COVID-19, we reopened the Georgetown County Veterans Services Office on May 18. However, we request that veterans and family members continue to handle business with our office via fax, email or telephone if possible. For those who do have to come to our office, we strongly encourage that you please wear an appropriate facial covering. Also, please call to schedule an appointment, as our office is limiting walk-in traffic at this time. For those who have a smart phone, our office can process any claims or appeals over the telephone. We are still unable at this time to make personal home and nursing home visits. If you know a veteran or a spouse of a deceased veteran who needs our services and is homebound or in a nursing facility, please call our office at 843-545-3330 or email me at dmurphy@gtcounty.org.

To keep within the parameters that are in place with Social Distancing, our office personnel will be wearing masks for any meetings and will not allow more than two individuals in our office lobby at a time. Only one visitor at a time is allowed in personal offices to conduct business. Thank you for understanding.

A new process has been announced for **veterans needing to notify Veterans Affairs of admittance to a hospital or emergency room**. These notifications are now processed through a national call center. Notification of a veteran self-presenting for emergency care in a community facility can be made by the veteran, their representative or the community emergency care facility within 72 hours of the services being provided. Submit notification by contacting the Centralized Emergency Care Notification Call Center by phone at 844-72HRVHA (844-724-7842) or email at VHAEmergencyNotification@va.gov.

The Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center recently reported the



Murphy

VA is moving forward with expanding select services at facilities across the country. As part of VHA's effort, each VISN has selected facilities as lead sites to be the first to implement a phased approach to expanding health care services while ensuring a safe environment.

The Charleston VA was selected as a lead site for the nation and began this first phase on May 18. Lessons learned from lead sites will be shared with other facilities as they plan their expansions. As the center welcomes veterans back, it will continue safety measures including, but not limited to: physical distancing, environmental cleaning recommendations outlined by the CDC, face coverings for all, and staff, and screening for signs of COVID-19 infection.

Additionally:

- Veteran patients should enter the building no earlier than 15 minutes before their appointment time.
- Veteran patients should exit the building as soon as their appointment is completed.
- The no visitor policy continues with some exceptions for end-of-life care patients; no visitors under age 18.

All individuals must wear face masks while on our campuses and in center facilities.

For anyone who is sick or has symptoms of respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath), **the VAMC Telephone Advice Program is still the best, first contact before visiting a healthcare facility**. Staff are available 24/7 for nurse advice and triage. Patients may be referred from VA to MUSC Health or VA clinics in Savannah, Hinesville or Myrtle Beach for drive-through testing. Testing referral and appointments are required.

More information on COVID-19 is available at:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - VA COVID Information: <https://www.va.gov/coronavirus/>
- If the Georgetown County Veterans Services Office can assist you, please let us know.

Our office number is (843) 545-3330, and our fax number is (843) 545-3312. You may also email me at dmurphy@gtcounty.org. Please don't hesitate to reach out if I may be of assistance.

Stay Safe!

David Murphy, *Manager,*

Georgetown County Office of Veterans Affairs

McCartney named Employee of the Quarter

Tyler McCartney, a Firefighter/EMT with Midway Fire and Rescue, is Georgetown County's Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of this year.

Since joining the team at Midway in November of 2017, McCartney has proven to be a valuable asset to the department and the county. He excelled throughout his probationary objectives and testing, and continues to push himself, said Battalion Chief Jeff Pifer, who nominated McCartney for recognition. McCartney's duties entail patient care, vehicle/station maintenance and customer service, in addition to firefighting.

"He is the kind of person who is always

pushing himself to succeed, and his drive influences those around him," Pifer said. "After he got off probation, he took the classes required to drive and operate our apparatus and systematically has been checked off on all our apparatus except the new L814 (ladder truck)."

In 2018, McCartney started studying to become a paramedic at Horry-Georgetown Technical College, and has done well throughout his study. He has scored well in all his classes and has put in the time to complete the many hours of ride time to be eligible to test for his National Registry Paramedic certification, which he received in late



May. McCartney was named Midway's Employee of the Month in January of this year, and was also elected as the Emergency Services Department's Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2020.

He is known around the station as a team player, and someone who always carries a positive perspective.

Georgetown County, South Carolina County Government

Numbers to know

(All begin with area code 843)

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



Sheriff's Office joins call for justice, equality



Georgetown County Sheriff Carter Weaver and City of Georgetown Police Chief Kelvin Waites were among local law enforcement who added their voices to a nationwide call for justice in recent weeks following the killing of George Floyd by a police officer in Minneapolis on May 25.

The cruelty and tragedy of Floyd's death outraged the nation, leading to widespread protests and calls for police to be held accountable for wrongful killings and unequal treatment of people of color. Local law enforcement marched alongside protestors in peaceful events in Pawleys Island and Georgetown this month.

In a [statement issued May 29](#), Weaver condemned the actions of the law enforcement officers involved in Floyd's death.



At top: Sheriff Carter Weaver, far right, and City Police Chief Kelvin Waites are at the front of a March for Justice in Georgetown on June 4. Above and below are scenes from a similar marches law enforcement participated in in Georgetown and Pawleys Island. All events were peaceful.

