



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact:

Jackie Broach, public information officer

Phone: (843) 545-3164

E-mail: jbroach@gtcounty.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public services employees from three counties shine in regional Backhoe Rodeo

GEORGETOWN COUNTY — Despite being disrupted by a downpour that sent spectators running for shelter, the 19th annual Backhoe Rodeo at the Georgetown County Landfill was a “profound success,” said Ray Funnye, the county’s director of public services.

The regional competition took place Thursday afternoon and involved 18 backhoe operators from jurisdictions including Georgetown County, the City of Georgetown, Horry County, the City of Myrtle Beach, the City of Conway, Charleston County, the Town of Surfside Beach and the City of Charleston. In addition to giving the competitors an opportunity to showcase their skills, the event — a part of American Public Works Week — is intended to put the spotlight on all public works employees and how vital they are to communities.

“The theme for this year’s celebration was ‘Because of Public Works,’ and it’s all about how public works impacts the quality of life in communities around the world,” Funnye said. “It’s because of public works that we are able to have clean water, safe streets and neighborhoods, efficient transportation systems and clean communities.”

Participants in the rodeo amazed onlookers with their performances in three separate events. The first event had each competitor use the bucket of a backhoe to pick up a baseball attached to a chain, and use the chain to guide the ball through a maze. Competitors were also asked to guide a hoop over a distorted pipe lined with obstacles. In the last event they had to pick up items set on top of traffic cones and transfer them to a designated location.

Each participant had a maximum of three minutes to complete each event, though most were able to maneuver through the difficult tasks in a fraction of that time. The goal was to get the best combined time for the three events.

First, second and third place awards in the Backhoe Rodeo were claimed by Charleston County employees this year. Matthew Bishop claimed the top prize and will move on to the state championship, while Marvin Green took 2nd place and Kevin Brown was in 3rd.

In addition to the Backhoe Rodeo, Georgetown County Public Services was host to the Safety Olympics on Thursday. The program was a fun way for the department to promote safety, health and teamwork amongst its staff. The department also visited students at Browns

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Ferry Elementary School this week to demonstrate heavy equipment used in the public works industry.

“It was a great experience for the students, but also for the heavy equipment operators,” Funnye said. “This whole week has been a tremendous success in recognizing our professionals who serve the public good every day with a quiet dedication.”

Georgetown County thanks everyone who participated in these events and helped make this year’s American Public Works Week a memorable one.

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