



The Georgetown County Chronicle



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

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Calendar

Feb. 6 – Sheriff’s Office participates in Polar Plunge, 11 a.m. at the Litchfield Inn. See page 4.

Feb. 9 – Georgetown County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. (Virtual meeting).

Feb. 15 – County offices and facilities are closed for Presidents Day.

Feb. 18 – Tea and Poetry Series continues with Marcus Amaker and Len Lawson. See page

Feb. 18 – Georgetown County Planning Commission Meeting, 5:30 p.m. (Virtual Meeting).

Feb. 23 – Georgetown County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. (Virtual meeting)

Volume 9, Issue 5

January 2021

Multiple recreational projects open this winter

Georgetown County Parks and Recreation has a lot for residents – and visitors too – to be excited about this winter.

The department, along with Georgetown County Public Services and community volunteers, cut the ribbon on a new section of bikeway this month. It was a project more than two decades in the making. Now, Parks and Recreation staff is gearing up to open a new track and field complex in Georgetown next month and a new multipurpose field and playground in Andrews this spring.

And that’s just the start.

“We have quite a few projects that are coming to fruition now, and a whole other batch that we’ll be getting started on in the next few months,” said Beth Goodale, the county’s director of Parks and Recreation. “There’s a lot to look forward to and a lot to keep our staff busy.”

The newest section of the Waccamaw Bikeway runs from Trace Drive to Boyle Drive in North Litchfield and was officially opened with a small ceremony on Jan. 15. It connects two significant stretches of bikeway that run from Willbrook Blvd. up Business 17 and



The new field complex features a rubberized track with a multi-purpose field in the center, a concession stand, playground and picnic shelter.

through Murrells Inlet, allowing cyclists to ride safely from Litchfield to the Georgetown/Horry County line on a designated, paved bikeway.

The project was largely funded by a \$100,000 grant from S.C. Parks, Recreation and Tourism. Bike the Neck, a fundraising and advocacy group for bike trails on the Waccamaw Neck, along with Georgetown County, provided matching funds.

See “Recreation,” Page 3

County offices impacted by cyber attack; emails down

Georgetown County’s computer network suffered a major infrastructure breach on Jan. 23. The breach impacts most of the county’s electronic systems, including county emails. The 911 system and operations at the Detention Center have not been affected.

As of Jan 27, it is uncertain when systems may be up again. Anyone trying to reach a county office should do so via phone. Most county phone lines are still operational, and staff members continue to work normal hours. Phones at the

Office of Elections and Voter Registration, and at library branches are not operational at this time.

The county has insurance against cyber attacks and is working with cyber security experts to navigate this issue and determine exactly what information may have been compromised in the attack. The county’s website, gtcounty.org, is still operational and additional updates may be found there as they become available.

The Sheriff’s Office noted that while public safety services will be



uninterrupted, it will not be able to provide copies of incident reports, background checks and permits for metal collection and the shooting range until the network issues are resolved.

Newly elected, re-elected officials sworn in; Morant is Council Chairman



Clockwise from top left: Newly elected District 2 County Council Member Bob Anderson is pictured taking the oath of office on Jan. 6, with his wife Karol by his side; Newly elected Coroner Chase Ridgeway, with his wife and daughter by his side, took the oath of office Jan. 4; Sheriff Carter Weaver was sworn in for his first full term with his father, Vince, by his side; County Council Member Louis Morant (District 7) was elected Council Chairman for a 2-year term during council's first meeting of the year on Jan. 12. Council Members Everett Carolina (District 3), Lillie Jean Johnson (District 4) and Raymond Newton (District 5), also renewed their oaths during the ceremony on Jan. 6. Council's Feb. 9 and Feb. 23 meetings will be virtual due to COVID-19.



Phone scammers pose as deputies

Scammers have been calling local residents this month, claiming to have warrants for their arrest from the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff Carter Weaver warns.

The Sheriff's Office was alerted by several people who received the scam calls. The caller claimed to be a deputy and instructed them to withdraw money from their bank account and deposit it in another account. Caller ID falsely said the telephone call was coming from Georgetown County Sheriff's office.

Warrants are never served over the telephone, and no law enforcement officer will ask for money. If you receive one of these calls, hang up and notify the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office at (843) 546-5102. Never give out your personal information over the phone or buy gift cards to satisfy a debt.

Mask ordinance extended into March

Georgetown County Council voted on Jan. 26 to extend the ordinance requiring individuals to wear face coverings in Georgetown County businesses. The ordinance will expire March 9 if not renewed by County Council at its Feb. 23 meeting. The ordinance mandates that members of the public wear masks that cover the nose and mouth in Georgetown County businesses, including grocery stores, pharmacies, restaurants and retail stores. Restaurant patrons are exempt while dining, but employees must wear a mask at all times while having face-to-face interaction with the public. For more information, visit gtcounty.org.

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



The Parks and Recreation Department mascot, Forest the Squirrel, cuts the ribbon on a new section of bikeway in North Litchfield Jan. 15. With him are, from left, Linda Ketron of Bike the Neck and County Council Members Bob Anderson John Thomas, Louis Morant and Steve Goggans.

Recreation

Continued from Front Page

The new track and field complex, located at Beck Recreation Center, is currently scheduled to open in mid-February. Construction is substantially complete, but the contractor still has some finishing touches to add, including grassing and rock removal. The complex has a full-size, lined track with rubberized coating. A multipurpose field sits in the center of the track.

There are also two basketball courts and a picnic shelter at the front of the complex, and a restroom and concession building near the back.

"People are really eager to get out there and put it to use," Goodale said. "We're very close to having it ready."

The Department will work with the USA Track and Field Program on youth activities at the track facility this spring. Plans are also to introduce local Girls on the Run and Kids

Run the Nation track programs based at Beck. Adult and senior track programs, along with a Couch to 5K fitness and walking program are also in the works.

At the Andrews Regional Recreation Center, which re-opened in a new facility last year, a new multipurpose field is in the final stages of grow-in and should open this spring. Georgetown County also received a state grant to fund purchase and installation of a new \$40,000 playground at the center. The equipment should be delivered in early February and installed shortly after.

Georgetown County is also in the final stages of permitting for construction of four new baseball/softball fields adjacent to Waccamaw Elementary School.

Construction should start this summer, after the upcoming baseball season wraps up. The fields will increase capacity for both local league play and tournament play, which is part of the county's recreational tourism plan.

Rec. Manager appointed to two board positions

Loren Wallace, recreation manager for Georgetown County Parks and Recreation, has been appointed to two voluntary board positions.

Wallace has been named board secretary for the S.C. Recreation and Parks Association. He was also appointed this month to the Tidelands Health Board of Trustees Community Engagement Committee. The committee exists to assist the board of trustees in fulfilling its health equity oversight responsibilities, ensuring the highest level of alignment to identified community health equity gaps in the planning of Tidelands' mission, vision and values.



Wallace

Meet Forest the Squirrel



Georgetown County Parks and Recreation had been waiting for the perfect time to officially introduce its new mascot, Forest. When the staff found out Jan. 21 is National Squirrel Appreciation Day, they knew the time had arrived.

Forest, you see, is a friendly squirrel whose job is to encourage people of all ages to be more active and "Go Nuts" for parks and recreation.

"When we went to the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Conference in Greenville in 2015, we saw the mice which they have scattered around downtown on Main Street," said Beth Goodale, director of Georgetown County's Parks and Recreation department. "We started thinking of opportunities to get kids involved, because up there they have a lot of fun looking for those mice."

In similar fashion to the mice in Greenville, small squirrel statues will be placed in various areas of each of Georgetown County's recreation facilities, in hopes that both children and adults alike will spend time hunting for Forest's "little helpers."

Forest was the winner of an informal poll conducted among area children, who were asked to choose between a squirrel and a seagull as the animal that best represents the Georgetown County area.

"We want to do something with Forest that sort of brands us and our youth programs, as well as gives us an opportunity and a platform to get kids doing things in the forests around the parks," Goodale said. "It's our hope that not only kids but their parents will get outside, or come to our facilities, and be active while also having a good time searching for Forest's helpers."

Book contributors discuss Sandy Island past, present, future

On Tuesdays at 10 a.m. throughout February and into the first week of March, the Georgetown Library System will host a series of online presentations by key contributors to a new book of essays, photography and artwork about Sandy Island — one of America's largest undeveloped freshwater islands.

The special series will highlight the team of essayists, photographers, artists and editors who just completed an amazing three-year project to capture in words and images the unique world of Sandy Island. Beginning with archaeologist and historian Susan Hoffer McMillan's talk on Feb. 2, contributors to "Sandy Island...Forever: A Collaboration of Essays & Images" will provide fascinating online talks based on their chapters. These talks will allow the public to gain a full and satisfying appreciation of what has been preserved and why it matters. All programs are free and openly available to the public via the [library's Facebook page](#), and are sponsored by the Friends of the Waccamaw Library. In addition, all presentations will be made available for viewing afterward on the Library's [YouTube channel](#).

Sandy Island is a 9,145-acre cultural and ecological sanctuary at the heart of the Waccamaw and PeeDee Rivers in Georgetown County. The island, accessible only by boat, is home to a small, but vital Gullah community as well as a nature preserve. In 1990, the island's long-standing Gullah culture and its native wildlife and botany were under pressure from commercial real estate development to construct an elite resort, with plans for a bridge, thousands of condos, a marina, and three golf courses. After a prolonged legal battle, islanders, with stalwart aid from the Coastal Conservation League and a battery of regulatory agencies, were able to conserve their home against commercial development in 1997.

The presentations will explore diverse elements of Sandy Island's past, present, and future, celebrating the island's remarkable archaeological record, geological phenomena, historical complexity, cultural distinctiveness, and ecological array. The speakers will offer insights about their individual contributions to "Sandy Island... Forever," their presentations enriched with vivid images drawn from the



Pyatt's General Store, shown in this 2010 photo, is among the first thing people see when arriving on Sandy Island.

book, interweaving vintage and current photographs.

The full schedule of online presentations is as follows:

- **Feb. 2:** "Sandy Island History" by Susan Hoffer McMillan (Former Director, Waccamaw Archaeology Partnership)
- **Feb. 9:** "The Huntingtons, Brookgreen Gardens, & Sandy Island" by Robin R. Salmon (Vice President of Art and Historical Collections & Curator of Sculpture, Brookgreen

Gardens)

- **Feb. 16:** "Sandy Islanders: A People of the Land" by Vennie Deas Moore (Folklorist & Cultural Preservationist, Rice Museum)

- **Feb. 23:** "Saving Sandy Island" by Dana Beach & Virginia Beach (Founding Director, Coastal Conservation League / Author)

- **March 2:** "Sandy Island Natural History Tour" by Linda Ketron & Anne Swift Malarich (Editor & Publisher / Photographer Editor & Photographer)

PLEASE SUPPORT THE GEORGETOWN COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE AS IT PARTICIPATES IN THE

Polar Plunge

Feb. 6, 2021 at the Litchfield Inn beginning at 11 a.m.
Proceeds benefit the Special Olympics of S.C.



Become a sponsor or sign up to
participate at
<https://bit.ly/GeorgetownPlunge>
or call (843) 436-6042



County presents Volunteer of the Year Awards to two

Gene Turner and Master Firefighter Justin Lenker of Midway Fire and Rescue were recognized by Georgetown County this month for their volunteer efforts. Turner was named the County's Volunteer of the Year for 2020 and Lenker was named Employee Volunteer of the Year for 2020.

Turner has been a dedicated volunteer with Midway Fire and Rescue for the last six years. According to Midway Chief Doug Eggiman, he is the "consummate professional when serving our community."

Turner typically volunteers several days a week to run the department's front office, fielding phone calls and inquiries, as well as walk-ins. He has developed a vast knowledge of fire department procedures and operations, which makes him a great asset in this role.

The facility Turner volunteers at also houses the Fire Marshal's office, and Turner has proved himself to be of valuable assistance to that staff as well. He handles administrative tasks, allowing the two-person staff in the Fire Marshal's office to concentrate on larger issues. The Fire Marshal's office deals with more than 1,000 commercial occupancies, each with extensive files on construction, fire protection systems, testing reports and fire inspection reports. These files must be maintained for the life of the occupancy, and must stay current with relevant information regarding the building. Turner stepped up to assist and has been instrumental in helping with the filing work, as well as preparing documents to ensure they are properly cataloged.

Turner is currently working on a project to reformat and enter more than 1,000 occupancies into the newly updated Fire Records Management System. He was also responsible for completing the system update.

Eggiman said Turner would be an excellent firefighter, but unfortunately has mobility issues that would prevent him from handling some of the physical requirements of the position. Still Turner has proven himself to be a valuable and irreplaceable member of Midway's team, not only helping out within the department, but also



Gene Turner



Justin Lenker

joining in public outreach activities and assisting with special events.

The Employee Volunteer of the Year award is presented at the end of each year to recognize one county employee who also volunteers their time and service to one of the county's many departments and divisions outside the course of their regular job. Lenker has been employed with Georgetown County for seven years and has been volunteering to support the department and his community outside the course of his regular duties for just as long. He organizes and runs the annual Pawleys Island Chili Cook-off fundraiser, takes the

lead in organizing an annual firefighter benefit conference, and is heavily involved in fundraising and building public awareness for autism, animal rescue and more.

Additionally he is involved in lobbying for legislation that helps firefighters with cancer.

While still being on a competitive paint ball team and running in 5Ks and "tough mudders," he makes time for all of this. His work with the Chili Cook-off has brought hundreds of visitors to the area and raised thousands of dollars for the Make A Wish Foundation. He organizes a yearly weekend conference to help firefighters in the area better themselves. All proceeds from this conference are donated to the Carney Strong Foundation.

Lenker has made shirts and sold them to the public to raise money for various cancer-related organizations, and he has given hundreds of hours to fight for a bill that would aid firefighters who develop cancer. He was also instrumental in getting Autism kits placed on Midway's medic units to assist with calming children with Autism to make their experiences in an emergency as comfortable as possible.

Lenker's colleagues say he is always thinking of others and always willing to lend a hand to help someone in need. In his letter nominating Mr. Lenker Battalion Chief Gerald Liberatore said Mr. Lenker "is not only a top notch employee, but he is an asset to the people of Georgetown County."

COVID-19 Vaccinations for Veterans

By David Murphy

Happy New Year, veterans. As in 2020, COVID-19 is still at the top of everyone's mind in 2021. Luckily vaccines have been rolled out and are being distributed to eligible populations now.

Working with the Centers for Disease Control and other federal partners, the Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a phased distribution plan to benefit the most people. Under this phased plan, vaccines are offered first to VA health care personnel and veterans residing in Community Living Centers or Spinal Cord Injuries and Disorder Centers. The VA will offer vaccination to additional veterans at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 after health care personnel have been offered the vaccine.

The VA based its plan on CDC guidelines based on the following

criteria: risk of becoming infected, risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19, risk of spreading the virus to others, and risk of harm to society if essential workers are unable to work.

The VA's long-term goal is to vaccinate all veterans and employees interested in receiving the vaccine. However, vaccine supply is very limited at this time. If a veteran's care team determines the veteran is eligible to receive the vaccine, the veteran will be contacted directly when the vaccine is available.

For more information, visit <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>. On this national website, you can sign up for the "stay informed" tool that will send you updated information as it becomes available.

Proud to Serve,
David Murphy
Georgetown County Veterans Affairs Officer

The Waccamaw Library and the Poetry Society of S.C. are pleased to announce the



**2021
Litchfield
Tea and Poetry
Series**



Monthly presentations through April, each featuring thought-provoking poets.



Presented for free in a virtual format due to COVID-19. Watch on [Facebook Live](#) or [YouTube](#).

February 18



Marcus Amaker was named the first Poet Laureate for Charleston in 2016 — a position in which he continues to serve. His poetry has been presented by The Kennedy Center and appears in The Chicago Tribune, Departures Magazine and Charleston Magazine. In 2019, he won an SC Governor’s Arts Award and was named the artist-in-residence for the renowned Gaillard Center. His eighth book is “The Birth of All Things.”



Len Lawson is author of “Chime,” the chapbook “Before the Night Wakes You,” and coeditor of “Hand in Hand: Poets Respond to Race.” A nominee for the Pushcart Prize and the “Best of the Net” anthology, he has been honored with the Carrie McCray Nickens Fellowship from the S.C. Academy of Authors (2020) as well as the Jasper Magazine Literary Artist of the Year (2016). He teaches college-level English in S.C.

March 18



Marjory Wentworth held the position of Poet Laureate of S.C. for the past 17 years. She is the New York Times bestselling author of “Out of Wonder,” “Poems Celebrating Poets,” coauthor of “We are Charleston: Tragedy and Triumph at Mother Emanuel,” and more. She is a seven-time Pushcart Prize nominee, and teaches courses in creative writing and social justice at the College of Charleston.

Immediately following Wentworth’s reading, there will be an open mic session. All who attend are invited to read one of their own poems.

April 15



Dr. Jo Angela Edwins is professor of English at Francis Marion University and has published chapbook “Play” and poems in several journals and various anthologies. She has received poetry awards from the Poetry Super Highway and the S.C. Academy of Authors, and is Poet Laureate of the Pee Dee.



Ed Madden is author of four books of poetry and a memoir in poems about his father’s last months in hospice care. He is also a professor of English at the University of S.C. His poems have appeared in “Crazyhorse,” “Los Angeles Review,” “Poetry Ireland Review,” and more. He is Poet Laureate for the City of Columbia.

Library to host virtual food symposium this March

Scholars from around South Carolina and the nation will come together March 4-5 for a free virtual symposium focused on unique elements of foods from the Palmetto State. The event is hosted by the Georgetown County Library and sponsored by the Friends of the Georgetown Library, Friends of the Waccamaw Library and S.C. Humanities.

Titled “From Blue Hills to Green Sea: Representing South Carolina Foodways,” the symposium will take place each day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will be broadcast for free on the [library’s Facebook page](#). Foodways experts will lead discussion on a fascinating culinary venture across the state, linking past and present, Piedmont and Lowcountry, blue hills and green sea, Appalachian heritage and Gullah culture and beyond.

Explore small towns and community icons with First Thursday program

Photographer Mike Lassiter will give participants a unique view of the Palmetto State on Feb. 4, when he presents “Our Vanishing Americana: A South Carolina Portrait.” The program is part of the Friends of the Waccamaw Library’s First Thursdays program, which has gone virtual during the pandemic. The program will be broadcast live on the Library’s Facebook page.

Lassiter set out exploring South Carolina backroads to capture glimpses of small towns, community icons and historic businesses. While rusted signs, antique gas pumps and faded brick facades of old storefronts first caught his eye, he pressed deeper to recover the lives of folks inside those general stores, barber shops and picture shows. A lot of those businesses may be gone — bypassed by interstates and big box retailers — but Lassiter’s work keeps their stories very much alive.

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

Parks & Rec., 545-3320

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

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



Local teen ranked No. 1 in state for tennis

Hard work and regular training have paid off for Logan Tomovski, 14. A longtime student of David Bromberg, head tennis pro at the county-owned Waccamaw Regional Tennis Center, Tomovski finished 2020 as the No. 1 ranked tennis player in the state of South Carolina in the 14 and under age division.

"It's not an easy thing to do, to end the year at No. 1," Bromberg said recently as Tomovski hit balls nearby on one of the center's clay courts during a training session. "He's a great competitor, a fantastic competitor and that's what separates him from a lot of the other kids. Everybody can kind of hit the ball, but it's about how do you do under pressure, and he's really good under pressure. He's a good problem solver – a thinker – and mentally he's just a little tougher than everybody else. He doesn't panic when things aren't going his way, and that gives him an edge."

End-of-year rankings are based on a player's top seven tournament results. Tomovski also ended the year ranked 8th in the South and No. 79 in the nation.

"I just practice a lot," Tomovski said modestly. It's certainly not an exaggeration. He's been playing the game since he was a toddler, and has trained under Bromberg since the Waccamaw Regional Tennis Center opened back in 2012. Tomovski was 8 at the time.

"He's a really good coach," Tomovski said of Bromberg.

Tomovski generally practices at the center 5-6 days a week, he added. He's a 9th-grader at Connections Academy and also plays on Waccamaw High School's varsity tennis team.

Tomovski said he first picked up a racquet at age 3 with encouragement from his father, Alex, who is a good player in his own right. Tomovski's brother Braedon, 16, also plays at a high lev-



Logan Tomovski at the Tennis Center.

el. There's definitely some sibling rivalry on the court, as the boys regularly practice together. But they never go up against each other in tournament play, Tomovski said. "It would get a little too heated. But we play doubles a lot in tournaments," he added.

Tomovski said he has looked casually at colleges that would offer the best opportunities to continue advancing his play after high school, but hasn't settled on anything yet. "I've still got some time," he said. "But I know I want to keep playing."

The Waccamaw Regional Tennis Center, located at 302 Gilman Road in Pawleys Island, offers court rentals, programming and lessons for players of all ages and experience levels. Tennis programming and instruction are also offered at other recreation facilities across the county. For more information, call (843) 545-3450.

Deputies will continue prescription deliveries for senior citizens

Carter Weaver, Sheriff of Georgetown County, says deputies will continue delivering prescription medications to older adults and other county residents identified as having higher risk of serious health complications should they contract the coronavirus (COVID-19).

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

GCSO has already coordinated with pharmacies in Georgetown County on pick-up and delivery of

prescription medication under these guidelines:

- The person prescribed for the medicine 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 has been pre-paid;
- The recipient shows the deputy a valid photo ID to prove ownership and signs for the prescription.

