



The Georgetown County Chronicle



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

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Calendar

May 24 – Georgetown County Council budget workshop, 4 p.m. Regular council meeting begins at 5:30 p.m., County Council Chambers, 129 Screven St.

May 26 – Georgetown County Planning Commission meeting, 5:30 p.m., County Council Chambers, 129 Screven St.

May 30 – County offices are closed in observance of Memorial Day.

May 31 – First day of early voting for the June 14 primary election. See page 2.

June 16 – Georgetown County Planning Commission, 5:30 p.m., County Council Chambers, 129 Screven St.

June 20 – County offices are closed in observance of the Juneteenth holiday.

June 26 – Last day to register for County Adult Softball League. Season begins July 5. See page 2.

June 28 – Georgetown County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m., County Council Chambers, 129 Screven St. (Council only meets once this month.)

Volume 10, Issue 8

May 2022

Thomas resigns from Georgetown County Council

John Thomas, the Georgetown County Council District 1 representative since 2015, announced today that he will resign from the council effective May 23. Per state law, a special election will not be required, as his resignation date is within 180 days of the general election. Thomas was not scheduled to be on the ballot, as he had announced last year that he would not seek re-election. His term would have expired Dec. 31, 2022.

In a letter to County Council Chairman Louis Morant, Thomas said it had been an honor and a privilege to serve the county and its residents, “but now is the time to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere... I am very grateful to the citizens of District 1 for allowing me to have served as their Councilman for more than the last seven years. During that time, I would like to think that I have had a part in making Georgetown County a better place to live, work and play.”

In his acceptance of Thomas’ resignation, Chairman Morant thanked Thomas for his service to the county’s residents. “During your tenure, Georgetown County has seen a tremendous level of positive change and growth in numerous areas, despite unprecedented challenges faced by the county in recent years,” he wrote.



During his time on council, Thomas served as chairman from 2019-2021 and led the council through the search for a new administrator upon the retirement of Sel Hemingway in 2020. They offered a contract to current Administrator Angela Christian in March of 2020. Just six days later, the county had to close its facility doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which Thomas also guided the county through as the head of council.

Additionally, he also served on the Policy Committee of the Grand Strand Area Transportation Committee

See “Resignation,” Page 7

County receives statewide Outstanding Safety Award

Georgetown County government was presented this month with the Outstanding Safety Achievement Award from the S.C. Association of Counties. The annual award is presented to counties that have demonstrated significant progress in a specific area of their risk management and safety program through special projects.

Georgetown County received the award due to safety initiatives introduced following a ransomware attack it fell victim to in January 2021. The initiatives demonstrated county staff had learned from their experiences and had taken action to prevent such an attack from happening again.

The county’s program obviously



Pictured are (left to right) Back Row: Georgetown County Council Members Louis Morant, John Thomas, Bob Anderson, Steve Goggans, Raymond Newton and Everett Carolina. Front Row: Georgetown County IT Director Seth Housand, Central Safety Committee Member Diane Cox, County Risk Manager Holley Causey, SCAC Director of Risk Management Services Robert Benfield, and County Council Member Lillie Jean Johnson.

included making major improvements to its cyber security, but also training and educating employees to make them more aware of various

ways cyber criminals try to gain access to networks and steal information or funds, and how to avoid

See “Safety Award,” Page 7

Public input sought on future of programming at Hasty Point

The Waccamaw Wildlife Refuge wants to know what kind of public programs and events local residents want to see offered at Hasty Point Plantation.



They hired a consultant to create a public input survey, which was released this month. Residents can fill out the survey at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sv/HGRTiKL/hasty>.

Situated on the Pee Dee River in Plantersville and spanning more than 770 acres, Hasty Point is one of the most recent acquisitions of the Waccamaw Wildlife Refuge. Previously, it was a private residence, but with its abundance of natural beauty and wildlife, the refuge sees ample opportunities for public use and education.

The property is home to longleaf pine forest, about 50 acres of wetlands, rice fields, massive live oak trees and historic buildings that will help tell the story of the area’s past. It also offers opportunities for hiking, fishing, kayaking and other forms of passive recreation.

The National Wildlife Refuge purchased the property last year for about \$5 million. The purchase was made possible with assistance from Ducks Unlimited, the Open Space Institute and other partners. The Open Space Institute acquired an additional 237 adjacent acres shortly after, which will further increase public access in the area.

For more information, contact Laura Mandala at laura@mandalaresearch.com.

New state rules allow early voting; absentee voting now mail-in only

A new state law signed this month by the governor will impact how and when South Carolinians can vote in the primary elections taking place on June 14.

The legislation established “early voting” in South Carolina. That means any registered voter can vote up to two weeks before an election. Previously, the only way to vote early in the Palmetto State was to vote “absentee” — either in person or by mail — but there are restrictions on who is allowed to vote absentee.

With the introduction of early voting, in-person absentee voting will no longer be allowed. Those who vote absentee will only be able to vote by mail.

For the June primary elections, early voting will begin May 31 and close June 10. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at the Georgetown County Office of Elections and Voter Registration, located at 303 N. Hazard St. There will be no weekend hours for early voting. If any additional locations are authorized for early voting, they will be announced by May 24.

For any necessary runoff elections for the June Primary, early voting will be available June 22 through June 24.

Voters who want to vote absentee by mail should request a ballot at scvotes.gov or by calling the Georgetown County Office of Elections and Voter Registration at (843) 545-3339. For more information on who is allowed to vote absentee, visit gtcounty.org/vote. The deadline to request a ballot is June 3. Ballots must be completed, signed and returned to the County Office of Elections and Voter Registration by 7 p.m. on June 14. Additionally, the return envelope must be witnessed.

Polling places will be open on June 14 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. View sample ballots and learn more at gtcounty.org/vote.

Georgetown County Adult Softball League

Summer 2022

Sign-up Information:

- Season Begins: July 5th
- Games will be played on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Fee: \$375/Team (\$100 Deposit)
- Open to Ages 18+
- Single Players Welcome
- Team registration deadline: June 26



TO REGISTER:

Bruce Wilkinson: (843)-325-6473 or email rwilkinson@gtcounty.org
<https://secure.rec1.com/SC/georgetown-county-sc/catalog>



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, sign up at gtcounty.org by clicking the “News & Alerts” icon on the home page.

If you have questions or comments about this newsletter, please contact Jackie Broach at (843) 545-3164 or jbroach@gtcounty.org. We welcome your feedback.

www.gtcounty.org

Falkenhagen named new County Fire-EMS Chief

Georgetown County Emergency Services is pleased to announce that James "Jim" Falkenhagen has been selected as the new Fire Chief for Georgetown County Fire- EMS.

Chief Falkenhagen brings more than three decades of fire and EMS experience to the table, having previously served as a District Chief with Horry County Fire Department, EMS Supervisor for Georgetown County EMS, and most recently as a company officer with Georgetown County Fire-EMS. We are excited for Chief Falkenhagen's progressive vision for not only the department, but also our community moving forward.

Chief Falkenhagen will officially transition into his new role as Fire Chief on May 31.



Jim Falkenhagen

2 County Public Works employees to compete in state Backhoe Rodeo



Of the 12 people who participated in the Regional Backhoe Rodeo this month, two were from Georgetown County and they placed 1st and 2nd in the competition. From left, Harold West won 1st place, Rodney Simmons won 2nd place and Jerry "Trae" Stevens of Horry County won 3rd place. They will advance to compete in the state competition in Greenville next month.

GEORGETOWN COUNTY SOCCER TRAINING CAMP

Stables Feild Complex June 6th - 9th

- Ages 7 - 13
- Only 60 spots available
- Registration April 25th - May 27th

Coach Allen Vital
Head Soccer Coach Tuseulum University

Allen Vital is in his 25th year of coaching college soccer as an NCAA head coach. Throughout his career, Vital has always been involved in helping young players develop their games and strive to achieve their goals. His contributions include several years working with the Tennessee State Soccer Olympic Development program and over 10 years organizing international summer and year around soccer training programs. He is the current Head Men's Soccer Coach of Tusculum University which is located in Greeneville, Tennessee.

Coach Diego Cardona

Diego Cardona has a BA in Physical Education from Tusculum College. Coach Cardona is in his 27 years of coaching at the college , Travel and High school level. Cardona has developed hundreds of players who have gone and to play at the college level. Coach Cardona is currently employed at North Broward Prep, Florida. In his 18th year at the Prep, Cardona has led the Boys Varsity Program to a record of 279-71-24 during the past eighteen years his team has won 10 district championships, one Regional final and advanced to the regional tournament in sixteen seasons. Cardona was named Miami Herald and Sun Sentinel Coach of the year in 2007- 08 and 2009 - 2010 and 2015- 2016..

Washington retires from Public Services



From left are Ray Funnye, director of Public Services; Michelle LaRocco, Environmental Services manager, and Washington.

Ricky Washington retired from the Environmental Services Division of Georgetown County Public Services this month after 20 years of excellent service. Washington joined Environmental Services as the supervisor of the county's Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) on May 6, 2002. Over the last two decades, he has been a tremendous asset not only to the department, but to the county as a whole, said Public Services Director Ray Funnye.

Under Washington's leadership, a hardworking team was built and many necessary changes were made to improve the recycling process in the MRF. Washington's positive attitude and respect for his team have impacted the entire division. They work hard to get their tasks completed and are always willing to lend a hand to other areas throughout the department.

"They are truly team players and that comes from having great leadership, which is something that Ricky has displayed tirelessly over his 20 years with us," Funnye said.

With the huge growth the county's population over the time Washington has been on staff, he has managed to overcome many obstacles created by huge increases in recyclable materials received. His leadership and knowledge enabled his team to stay productive, greatly increasing sustainability in the county.

"We could never thank Ricky enough for all he has done for Environmental Services and Georgetown County, but we can heartily say that our Public Services family will not be the same without him," Funnye said. "We all wish Ricky the best in his retirement years and hope that his future is filled with nothing but happiness."

Planning Commission meeting postponed

The May meeting of the Georgetown County Planning Commission has been delayed by one week.

While the Commission normally meets on the third Thursday of each month, this month's meeting will take place on May 26 at 5:30 p.m. in County Council Chambers. An agenda will be posted in the Agenda Center at gtcounty.org prior to the meeting.

Residents can keep track of and receive alerts about all Georgetown County public meetings at gtcounty.org.

Elliott named SC Building Official of the Year



Steven Elliott, center, Georgetown County's Building Official, has been named Building Official of the Year by the Building Officials Association of S.C. Elliott came to work for Georgetown County in 2007 and was promoted to Building Official in 2018.



Adult Summer Reading Activities

June 13th- August 5th:
Adult Summer Reading Bingo



It's that time of year again! Adult summer reading is back with more bingo and prizes! Come by the Waccamaw Neck Branch Library to pick up your bingo card OR email us at kcorey@gtcounty.org or mallen@gtcounty.org.

DIY Take & Go Kits (while supplies lasts)

- June 13th - Flower Pens
- June 27th - All-Purpose Cleaner
- July 11th - Bath Bombs
- July 25th - Rope Coasters
- August 1st - Wine Cork Earrings

Programs at the Waccamaw Neck Branch Library

- June 10th @ 10am- Ocean Themed Canvas Painting **Registration Required** Contact Kendra Corey at kcorey@gtcounty.org OR call 843-545-3351
- June 13th @ 1pm - Meditation with Maribeth MacKenzie
- June 21st @ 2pm - Walk and Burn Fitness & Dance Class
- July 8th @ 10am- Acrylic Pouring **Registration Required** Contact Kendra Corey at kcorey@gtcounty.org OR call 843-545-3351
- July 12 @ 2pm- Move & Groove Fitness & Dance Class
- July 18th @ 1pm- Meditation with Maribeth MacKenzie
- July 19th @ 2pm - Stretch & Tone Fitness & Dance Class
- August 9th @ 2pm- Balance & Stretch Fitness & Dance Class
- August 16th @ 2pm- Line Dance Fitness & Dance Class
- August 22nd @ 1pm- Meditation with Maribeth Mackenzie

Special Programs at the Beach

- July 7th @ 7pm- Beach Night Life with NERR at the south end of Pawleys Island. Register at: <http://northinlet.sc.edu/upcoming-events/>
- August 4th @ 7pm- Beach Night Life with NERR at the south end of Pawleys Island. Register at: <http://northinlet.sc.edu/upcoming-events/>

OCEANS OF
POSSIBILITIES

LatinNet United wins county's adult soccer championship for second time running



LatinNet United won the county's spring Adult League Soccer championship.

The Georgetown County Adult Soccer League wrapped up its spring season with a series of playoff games on Saturday, May 7. Four teams — No. 1 Georgetown United, No. 2 South Strand Football Group, No. 3 LatinNet United No. 4 Internazionale Atlas — each fought their hardest to win the championship.

In the first game of the day, defending champions LatinNet United defeated the South Strand Football Group, 5-1. In the second game, Internazionale Atlas pulled the upset over the top-ranked Georgetown United squad, earning a narrow 2-1 victory. In the league's championship game, LatinNet United managed to become the second team in recent years to win back-to-back league championships, eclipsing Internazionale Atlas by a score of 5-2.

Although the spring season is over, there is another opportunity to get in on the action. The Parks and Recreation department will present a summer league, which will begin in June and run through mid-August. For more information regarding registering a team for this league, please contact Randy Akers at (843) 359-6419 or bakers@gtcounty.org.

Free Health Awareness

THANKS TO EMS WORKERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

May is EMS month and we want to use the opportunity to help you get to know the Emergency Medical Services providers in your community.



MAY 23, 2022
10-11 A.M.
N. SANTEE SR. CENTER
1484 MT. ZION AVE.

Free: Medical and health-related information and answers, blood pressure checks, File of Life, light refreshments and more!
Call (843) 545-3140 for details.



Georgetown
FARMERS MARKET

SATURDAYS
8AM-1PM
MAY 7 THRU OCT. 29
122 SCREVEN ST.
DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN

 WWW.WACCAMAWMARKETS.ORG 

Resignation

Continued from Front Page

(GSATS), and for many years volunteered with Amazing Journey, Inc., a nonprofit that supports the Georgetown County Sheriff's Re-entry Program.

Some of his many accomplishments during his tenure include enhancing tree protections in the county; helping the Emergency Services Department install the Opticom system, thus reducing response times for emergency responders; getting new sections of the Waccamaw Bikeway constructed; helping constituents keep helicopter tour companies from operating in the county; and limiting further growth on the Waccamaw Neck to the extent he was able.

"I would have liked to have gotten another Capital Projects Sales Tax passed. I think the county would have benefitted from that," Thomas said. "And I would have like to see more development on the western part of the county to increase the tax base."

Thomas' successor will be selected in the Nov. 8 general election. One candidate, Clint Elliott, will appear on the ballot.



Thomas, right, is pictured with another former County Council chairman, the late Johnny Morant, in County Council chambers following his Oath of Office ceremony in 2015.

Safety Award

Continued from Front Page

becoming a victim. Employees learned about methods such as phishing, malware and more.

Shortly after a training event, cyber criminals tried to steal funds from the county via an email sent to the county attorney by someone posing as the county's finance director.

The attorney was in the process of com-

pleting a property purchase on behalf of the county and had instructions for an electronic transfer of funds. The fraudulent email instructed him to use different account information from what he was originally given for the transfer. Training helped him avoid falling victim to the scam.

"Here, training and teaching resulted in a savings for the county," said Robert Benfield, director of risk management services for the S.C. Association of Counties. "It's a great example of everyone coming together at a

huge benefit to the county."

He added that programs like this don't work without across-the-board support from staff at all levels. He also commended the county for getting creative in its training initiatives to overcome obstacles to in-person training that were created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Georgetown County Risk Management is always looking for new and creative ways to improve safety. It most recently held a ladder safety training course for staff in its Facilities division.

"In a county, you want to preserve and protect the greatest asset you have, and the greatest asset you have is your people," Benfield said. He also talked about the financial benefits of keeping employees safe and reducing the number of accidents at the workplace. The safety of a work environment is measured by an "Experience Modification Factor." The average modifier is a 1. Anything higher results in higher workers compensation premiums for the employer; anything lower results in a discount.

Benfield said the county's Experience Modification score for the current year is .87, resulting in a 13% savings, or \$140,000 in taxpayer dollars that can be used elsewhere in the budget.

The presentation was made at the May 10 Georgetown County Council meeting. You can watch the full presentation and remarks during the video recording of the meeting on our YouTube channel at youtube.com/gtcountysc. All County Council meetings are livestreamed and archived on this channel.

COMMUNITY RAIN GARDEN INSTALLATION

Interested in sharing information on your business, organization, or group with the community?

Join The Nature Conservancy & Clemson Extension under the pavilion for a **tabling and community outreach** event!

Contact Nicole Pehl (nicole.pehl@tnc.org) to participate.

MAY 25, 2022
3-6 PM

ANDREWS LIBRARY

Glover retires after 25 years



Sheriff Carter Weaver congratulates Sgt. Amy Glover at a ceremony marking her retirement from Georgetown County Sheriff's Office after more than 25 years of service. Sgt. Glover served in a variety of positions and ended her career as a supervisor at the Georgetown County Detention Center.



Sheriff Carter Weaver presented Corporal Alexis Grove with the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office Correctional Officer of the Quarter award this week. Chief Deputy Neil Johnson, director of the detention center, said Grove's attention to detail is an expression of her commitment to dependability, efficiency and leadership. "Her abilities to resolve difficult situations are supported by remarkable patience and admirable tact, which results in peaceful resolutions," Johnson said. "More importantly, her character, attitude and work ethic inspires others to elevate to new levels of achievement and sheds positive reflections upon this agency."

Did you know you can watch Georgetown County Council meetings online?

We livestream every council meeting to make it easier for you to stay up to date with what's happening. Watch at [YouTube.com/GtCountySC](https://www.youtube.com/GtCountySC).

Sheriff recognizes Deputies of the Quarter



Perritt



Sims



Wainscott

Sheriff Carter Weaver named Deputy Christopher Perritt, Corporal Drew Sims and Deputy Brian Wainscott as Georgetown County Sheriff's Office Deputies of the Quarter at a recent ceremony for their actions following a vehicle chase and shooting involving an officer from another jurisdiction. First to arrive, Sims assessed the scene, checked on all persons involved and provided first-aid to the wounded subject. Perritt and Wainscott arrived a short time later and assisted Cpl. Sims. These officers were also instrumental in directing incoming units to the crime scene, and providing security until other units arrived. Lt. Chris Geno nominated these deputies for the professionalism and care demonstrated during this unfortunate incident.

Three dispatchers recognized for excellence



Poston



Taylor



McWethy

Sheriff Carter Weaver presented three women from Central Dispatch with plaques as Employees of the Quarter recently. Kelly McWethy, Morgan Poston and Chealcee Taylor were recognized at a ceremony at the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office. Joseph Williamson, 911 director, said the three have gone above and beyond in helping cover open dispatch shifts due to staff shortages. "We are honored," he said, "to have these dedicated employees as part of our team."

Interested in a career in law enforcement?

We have a variety of positions available. No previous experience necessary. Visit gtcounty.org/jobs for details.

Economic Development Department hosts Industry and CEO Roundtable



On April 19 and April 28, the Economic Development department hosted an Industry and CEO roundtable. During these events, attendees were able to talk about the strategies needed to improve workforce in the county as well as visibility. From the Department of Commerce to the Boudreaux Group, facilitators spoke to the group about the three Rs of workforce strategy: recruitment, reputation and retention. There are plans to keep this initiative going, and to work into an action plan to tackle needed improvements to make the county a more visible place to work, play and live.



Take a Kid Camping

Friday, June 3, 2022

8 Oaks Park 7:00pm - 8:30am

Additional Activities:

- Kickball under the lights
- Hiking
- Campfire stories
- Fishing
- S'mores and More!
- *Food will be provided*

Cost is FREE

- Pre-registration is required
- Kids must be with parent or guardian

For more information:

Contact: Bruce Wilkinson (843) 325-6473

Visit: GTC Parks.org



CARVERS BAY LIBRARY ICE CREAM PARTY

PLUS MOVIES, GAMES, AND MORE!

13048 Choppee Rd. Hemingway, SC 29554



MAY 28, 2022

11:00am - 1:30pm

For More Information, call:
(843) 545-3515

OCEANS OF POSSIBILITIES

with the Georgetown County Libraries
& the North Inlet-Winyah Bay NERR

Georgetown Main Library

May 18 @ 4pm Sea Turtles 101

June 21 @ 10am Crabs and Clams

August 10 @ 10am All Things Science!

Southern Georgetown Library

May 25 @ 10am Nature Journaling

June 15 @ 11am Beach Scene & Science

Aug 1 @ 11am Science & Beachcombing

Andrews Library

June 27 @ 10am Sea Turtles



For more information: gcounty.org or 843-545-3310

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/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



Parks & Recreation Track Season Ends

Nearly 80 local youths participated in Georgetown County Parks & Recreation's spring track & field season. During the month of April, the department held four meets, including a meet coinciding with the naming of the Anthuan Maybank Track & Field facility at the Beck Recreation Center. Congratulations to all of the participants on a great season, and special thanks to our parent volunteers for helping to make this season a success!

