



The Georgetown County Chronicle



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

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Calendar

March 8-10 – Shushcon, Waccamaw Library. Schedule at shushcon.com. See Page 9.

March 12 – County Council Budget Workshop, 4:15 p.m., Historic Courthouse, 129 Screven St. Regular meeting to follow at 5:30 p.m.

March 14 – Community meeting with District 7 County Council Member Louis Morant, 5-7 p.m., Choppee Regional Recreation Center. See Page 2.

March 16 – Georgetown Library Community Yard Sale, 8 a.m. to noon, behind the library on Cleland St. See Page 8.

March 21 – Planning Commission meeting, 5:30 p.m., Historic Courthouse, 129 Screven St.

March 26 – County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m., Historic Courthouse, 129 Screven St.

March 29 – County offices and facilities are closed in observance of Good Friday.

Volume 12, Issue 6

March 2024

Ellis named Director of the Year at state conference

Brandon Ellis, Georgetown County Emergency Services Director, was named Director of the Year at the 2024 S.C. Emergency Management Association's annual conference last month.

The Director of the Year award is given annually to a county emergency management director for outstanding service in emergency management. Georgetown County's Emergency Management Division falls within Emergency Services and Ellis serves dual roles as Emergency Services Director and Emergency Manager. To be eligible for this award, a candidate must be the director of a county emergency management organization in South Carolina and have demonstrated leadership qualities that enhance the emergency management capabilities of their community. Nominations are reviewed by the association's nominating committee and awards are given during the annual awards banquet.



Under Ellis' leadership, Georgetown County Emergency Management was named Agency of the Year at last year's SCEMA conference.

With nearly 15 years of emergency management experience at the local and state levels, Ellis has responded to eight federally declared disasters and countless emergency incidents in South Carolina. In 2023, he coordinated with local and state officials to revise the hurricane evacuation zones in Georgetown County as a part of the South Carolina Hurricane Evacuation Study update. The new zones are intended to allow for a more efficient and effective evacuation process, while using a most likely worst-case scenario for a tropical cyclone impacting our coastline. After careful review and coordination with emergency management stakeholders, revised hurricane evacuation zones were completed and submitted to S.C. Emergency Management for inclusion in the update.

Last August, Ellis led response and recovery efforts

See "Ellis," Page 9

County completes last project under Capital Improvement Plan

Nearly 17 years after Georgetown County embarked on a major 18-year Capital Improvement Plan, the final project has been completed under that plan.

Waverly Park, a \$6 million tournament-level softball park for elementary-age children, was completed in late February. A ribbon cutting will take place Wednesday, March 13, at 5 p.m. Players are already using the park's fields for practice sessions.

With the ribbon cutting, the county will mark the Capital Improvement Plan as complete — and successful — though there was some deviation from the original plan, which laid out \$313.5 million in

projects. Over the course of nearly two decades, there were price increases, revenue decreases and changes in the needs of the community. Some projects, including a new Georgetown Library, were ultimately cut from the plan.

Among the many projects completed under the plan were construction of the county Judicial Center on Cleland Street, replacement of the Waccamaw Library and construction of a brand new library branch in the Sampit/Santee area, community centers in



Parkersville and Murrells Inlet, new regional recreation centers, sports fields and complexes across the county, the Waccamaw Regional

See "Park," Page 9

Public meetings will focus on Sandy Island watershed plan

Georgetown County, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, will have two public open house meetings and information sessions on April 4. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the Sandy Island Watershed Plan and Environmental Evaluation Project.

The proposed project would provide flood protection of critical ingress/egress infrastructure or provide an alternative ingress/egress method for Sandy Island residents. At both meetings, representatives from Georgetown County, the NRCS, and their consultants will provide information on the proposed project including known planning activities completed to date, area environmental resources to be studied and various potential alternatives to be considered. The goal of the meetings is to obtain feedback on potential concerns on the information presented. The same information will be presented at both meetings.

There will be an on-island meeting for island residents at the Sandy Island fire station from 2:30-4 p.m. An off-island meeting for elected officials, special interest groups, resource agencies and any other interested parties or members of the general public will be take place at the Waccamaw Library from 5:30-7 p.m.

Comments on the Sandy Island Watershed Plan and Environmental Evaluation Project and associated scoping materials presented at the meetings will be accepted at each of the meetings and can also submitted in writing until April 18. Written comments can be sent to Lori Cole c/o JMT, Inc., 140 Stoneridge Drive, Ste. 600, Columbia, SC 29210 and or LColed@jmt.com.

Federal funding has been received to assist Georgetown County in developing the plan but has not yet been secured for the design or construction of these projects. For more information, please contact Rachel Whilden, Acting NRCS State Conservation Engineer, at 817-217-5592 or rachel.whilden@usda.gov

With repairs complete, offices displaced by flooding return home



After nearly three months of operating in makeshift quarters, the Georgetown County Treasurer's Office, Building Department and Stormwater Division have all returned to their normal locations. This means that County Council and other groups that normally meet in Council Chambers can begin having their meetings there again. Meetings had been relocated to Howard Auditorium as the Treasurer's Office had been operating out of Council Chambers since flooding on Dec. 17 impacted much of the back part of the historic courthouse on Screven Street. The Building Department had been crammed into Council's executive conference room. Staff and the public are happy to have operations back to normal.



GEORGETOWN COUNTY, S.C.

County Council Chairman
Louis Morant presents a
**District 7
Community
Chat**

Choppee Regional Recreation Center
Thursday, March 14, 2024
5 - 7 p.m.

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

Bonds issued to fund new jail



County officials signed bond closing documents in February for construction of a new detention center. The county bonded \$61 million for the project. The new jail will be built on Browns Ferry Road near the existing jail.

County recognized with state awards for outstanding safety



Pictured from left are Georgetown County Administrative Services Director Walt Ackerman, Risk Manager Holley Laycock, County Council Chairman Louis Morant, and Robert Benfield of the S.C. Association of Counties Workers Compensation Trust.

Georgetown County and its Risk Manager Holley Laycock have been presented with Outstanding Safety Achievement Awards by the S.C. Association of Counties Workers Compensation Trust.

The award is given to counties that have made significant progress in a specific area of their risk management and safety program. It recognizes specific projects or achievements rather than general overall improvement in safety and risk management.

The county's Central Safety Committee was awarded in recognition of the Safety Committee's development of a campaign to reduce heat-related illnesses. The campaign increased awareness of heat-related illnesses and the symptoms employees should look out for. Field training was conducted informing employees about how much water they should drink while working in the heat, personal protective equipment needed and the need to take frequent breaks in a cool, dry place. Additionally, two cooling vests were purchased for Park Maintenance employees to wear while cutting grass on county ballfields.

Laycock was presented with the 2023 Service Award for her efforts in helping other risk managers in the Insurance Trust. She shared information on employee drug screening programs, fleet insurance classifications, general liability allocations, workers compensation claims software and OSHA reporting requirements. The award was given not only for her hard work and commitment to safety, but also her willingness to help the other 41 counties in the Trust, said Robert Benfield, who presented the award on behalf of the Association. Laycock was nominated for the award by Florence County.

Watch the presentation at: <https://ow.ly/vGM150QckSm>.

Save The Date

APRIL 27, 2024
11 AM - 2 PM

3 Years Celebration

FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY

4187 POWELL RD. GEORGETOWN, SC 29440

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT US AT
843-545-3389 OR FSGCL2021@GMAIL.COM




Murrells Inlet in the running for Best Small Town in the South

Murrells Inlet is many things to many people. The “Seafood Capitol of South Carolina,” certainly. Home to Brookgreen Gardens, Huntington Beach State Park and the MarshWalk. And a historic village that was once frequented by pirates, including the legendary Blackbeard, according to tales.

Now, it’s in the running to be named the “Best Small Town in the South” through a contest promoted by USA Today’s 10Best Readers’ Choice travel awards. An expert panel selected Murrells Inlet as a contender for the contest, which launched on March 4.

The contest gives voters four weeks to vote for the candidate of their choice at <https://10best.usatoday.com/awards/travel/best-small-town-in-the-south-2024/>.

A person can vote once a day on their computer, phone, tablet, etc. for the run of the contest. The contest is GDPR compliant, and votes are now allowed even from Europe.

The judges praised Murrells Inlet for its Lowcountry charm, saying, “South of the hustle and bustle of Myrtle Beach and situated on the Hammock Coast, Murrells Inlet moves along at a slower pace. ‘The seafood capital of South Carolina,’ Murrells Inlet has long been a destination for fishing and water sports, as well as for dining on some of the freshest seafood at local restaurants. Garden enthusiasts will love wandering the grounds at Brookgreen Gardens, home to the largest collection of American figurative sculpture in the United States, while outdoor aficionados can hit the trails at Huntington Beach State Park.”

The Hammock Coast isn’t new in catching the eyes of editors and contest judges at USA Today. Historic Georgetown won USA Today’s Best Coastal Small Town contest in 2018 and has been a contender every year since. Brookgreen Gardens and Huntington Beach State Park have also been in the running for contests, too, such as “Best Botanical Gardens” or “Best State Park for RVers.”

Mark A. Stevens, director of tourism development for the Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce and South Carolina’s Hammock Coast®, said he is thrilled that Murrells Inlet is nominated for the USA Today “Best Small Town in the South” contest.

“Murrells Inlet is a shining example of the beauty and serenity of the Hammock Coast,” Stevens said. “I urge everyone to vote for Murrells Inlet, which attracts people from all over the country to enjoy its scenic waterfront, pristine beaches, and award-winning restaurants and attractions.”

Voting ends Monday, April 1, and the winners will be announced on 10Best on Friday, April 12, at noon.

Murrells Inlet is one of only two South Carolina locations named in the contest. The other is Seneca, South Carolina.

In addition to the two South Carolina nominees, others in the running for the “Best Small Town in the South” contest are Abingdon, Virginia; Alexander City, Alabama; Ashland, Kentucky; Batesville, Arkansas; By St. Louis, Mississippi; Brevard, North Carolina; Carrboro, North Carolina; Fairmont, West Virginia; Golf Shores, Alabama; Gulfport, Florida; Lynchburg, Tennessee; Maysville, Kentucky; Natchitoches, Louisiana; Sevierville, Tennessee; St. Marys, Georgia; Starkville, Mississippi; Thomasville, Georgia; and West Monroe, Louisiana.

“Prior competitions have been hotly contested, and we look forward to seeing how you rock the vote in your own community,” the editors wrote in a press release about the contest.



Murrells Inlet as seen from above in a photo from the contest website. Photo credit to Dave’s Digital.

Intermediate Ukulele Lessons

JOIN US AND CONTINUE TO GROW AS UKULELE PLAYERS!



Thursdays
March 14 – May 16, 2024
12:30pm – 1:30pm

at the Waccamaw Neck Branch Library
 41 St. Paul Place, Pawleys Island

Course will cover intermediate ukulele chords, strumming and rhythm techniques, picking, and a lot more!

NOT A BEGINNER COURSE.

Each participant is responsible to bring his or her own ukulele along with a tuner. Music stands recommended.

Sign-up is not required if you attended the beginner’s class. However, if you are interested in the class but learned ukulele elsewhere, please contact Catherine for details.
 Catherine (858-380-9155)

Filing for local partisan offices opens March 16

Two state House seats, two state Senate seats and four County Council seats are among those that will be on the ballot this November. Residents interested in running for one of those offices can file to do so beginning at noon March 16. Filing will take place at the County Office of Elections and Voter Registration at 303 N. Hazard St. Georgetown. Filing will close at noon on April 1.

The full list of seats residents can file for, along with the incumbent for each seat, is as follows:

- State Senate District 32 (Ronnie A. Sabb). Filing fee, \$416.
- State Senate District 34 (Stephen L. Goldfinch). Filing fee, \$416.
- State House District 103 (Carl L. Anderson). Filing fee, \$208.
- State House District 108 (Lee Hewitt). Filing fee, \$208.

- Sheriff (Carter Weaver). Filing fee, \$3,800.
- Probate Judge (Leigh Boan). Filing fee, \$3,035.80.
- Clerk of Court (Alma White). Filing fee, \$3,400.
- Coroner (Chase Ridgeway). Filing fee, \$2,400.
- Auditor (Ken Baker). Filing fee, \$2,751.36.
- Treasurer (Miriam Mace). Filing fee, \$2,751.36.
- County Council District 2 (Bob Anderson). Filing fee, \$637.88.
- County Council District 3 (Everett Carolina). \$637.88.
- County Council District 4 (Lillie Jean Johnson). \$637.88.
- County Council District 5 (Raymond Newton). \$637.88.

Trail Challenge Complete!



Jimmy and Sue Douglas recently became the first people to complete the Georgetown Outdoor Adventure Trails (G.O.A.T.) Hiking Series. They hiked the series' designated 8 trail routes located throughout Georgetown County and were each awarded a G.O.A.T. Herd T-shirt and stickers. The Herd consists of individuals or groups/teams that sign up to hike county trails. Participants can hike a minimum distance of 1-2 miles at each location or longer distances if desired. For more information, visit gtcparks.org.

Park

Continued from Front Page

Tennis Center, renovation of the historic courthouse on Screven Street, and much more.

"We're very excited that this long-awaited last project is now complete and we have a great place for younger kids to play ball on the Waccamaw Neck," said Beth Goodale, Georgetown County director of parks and recreation.

The project replaced two outdated fields with four new fields and adds restroom and concession facilities. It also eliminated drainage issues on the site and will improve stormwater management at the park, as well as for surrounding properties, including the neighboring Waccamaw Elementary School.

Goodale said she's proud of the design work on the site that allows for better drainage and handling of stormwater. The design included the addition of a drainage pond near the parking area. The irrigation system for the park will draw from the pond, utilizing stormwater runoff, which will first filter through the gravel in the parking area.

"We tried to be good stewards," Goodale said. "I think the surrounding community will be pleased with what we've done there."




OUTDOOR EXPO

16 MARCH, 2024

10AM - 4PM

The Georgetown County Parks and Recreation Department along with its outdoor activities partners are excited to hold an educational Outdoor Expo. at the Northwest Recreation Complex.

This event will include:

- Activities hosted by Outdoor clubs and other outdoor enthusiasts.
- Booths for Outdoor activity providers and Information
- Presentations from Conservation and environmental organizations

Georgetown County Parks & Recreation
2030 Church St. Georgetown, SC. 29440
(843) 545-3320 | www.GTCParks.org




@GTC Parks

Veterans' Corner: News from our Veterans Affairs Officer

Hello Veterans. Happy St. Patrick's Day and Happy Easter! I hope the new year has started off great for you. I have been getting many calls about VA Life Insurance and DD FM 214s after a veteran passes.

There are many veterans who may be eligible for VA Life Insurance. VA life insurance can offer financial security for veterans, service members, and their spouses and dependent children. Explore your options, manage your policy, and file claims to get the insurance benefits you've earned. For more information, visit <https://www.benefits.va.gov/insurance/> or call 800-669-8477.

DD Fm 214s are very vital to access benefits for your spouse, burial in a National Cemetery and rendering Military Honors. Veterans, please check to see if you have a copy of your DD FM 214. If you do not have one, please let our office know. We may have a copy here for you, or we can order it from the National Personnel Records Center in St Louis, MO. Please let your spouse or other family members know where a copy of your DD FM 214 is kept.

Some of you may receive a letter from the VA if you are still receiving paper checks for benefits. The VA is requiring all those that still receive a paper check to switch to Direct Deposit. This is an



By David Murphy

easy process. Just call the VA Call Center at 1-800-827-1000 and tell them that you want to switch to direct deposit. Please have your banking routing and account number ready. They also may ask you for other information to prove your identity.

Did you know that if you are 100% P&T you may be eligible for certain tax exemptions on your property and vehicles along with other benefits? Please give me a call at 843-545-3330 or email me at dmurphy@gtcounty.org to find out more.

Dr. David A. Murphy is Veterans Affairs Officer for Georgetown County's Office of Veterans Services.

Save the date for the Waccamaw Sports Classic

Men and women age 50 and older from across Georgetown County are invited to participate in the tri-county Waccamaw Sports Classic! Participants in a wide range of skill and fitness levels will compete for medals in a variety of activities. An award ceremony will follow.

The event will take place April 19 at the Anthuan Maybank Track Field at Beck Recreation Center in Georgetown. Registration includes a T-shirt and is \$7. For more information or to sign up, call Vanessa at 843-546-3197. The Waccamaw Sports Classic is a locally sanctioned event by the South Carolina Senior Games.

GTCPARK'S G.O.A.T. HERD PRESENTS

HIKE & SEEK

RULES:

- TEAMS OF 2-4 PEOPLE
- 90-MINUTE TIME LIMIT
- 25 CHECKPOINTS LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE 8 OAKS PARK TRAIL SYSTEM
- CHECKPOINTS ARE WORTH 3, 4, OR 5 POINTS DEPENDING ON THE DIFFICULTY OF LOCATING
- SCORE BASED ON 100 POSSIBLE POINTS
- TIE SCORES WILL BE BROKEN BY THE FASTEST TIME.
- TEAMS MUST REMAIN ON TRAILS AND OPEN SPACES.
- TAKE A TEAM PICTURE AT EACH CHECKPOINT TO DOCUMENT COMPLETION

8 OAKS PARK
6610 HIGHMARKET ST
SAT. MARCH 23
11AM

Georgetown County Parks & Recreation
2030 Church St. Georgetown, SC 29440
(843) 545-3320 | www.GTCParks.org

TRACK & FIELD

REGISTRATION MARCH 11TH - APRIL 5TH
\$15 REGISTRATION FEE

TRACK MEETS	SAT. 10AM
APRIL 13TH	APRIL 27TH
APRIL 20TH	MAY 4TH

REGISTER AT
GTCPARKS.ORG

JOIN OUR TEAM

View and apply for open county positions at gtcounty.org/jobs. We offer terrific benefits, government holidays, and a no-wait, no-copay health clinic for employees and family members covered under their insurance.

Restored classic plane will land at Georgetown Airport in April



The B-29 Doc History Restored Tour will land in Georgetown April 25-28. The tour stop at Georgetown County Airport will feature ground and cockpit tours, along with B-29 Doc Flight Experience Rides.

Tickets for B-29 Doc Flight Experience rides for the event at Georgetown County Airport are on sale now at www.b29doc.com/rides. Tickets for ground and cockpit tours will be available at the gate the days of the event for \$10 per person or \$20 per family.

B-29 Doc will arrive at the airport on Wednesday, April 24, and will be available for ground and cockpit tours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday and Friday, April 25 and 26. B-29 Doc Flight Experience Rides are scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28, and will be followed by ground and cockpit tours in the afternoon of both days.

Buildings demolished at Port



Three sheet metal buildings at the Georgetown Port were torn down this month. This is the first major change to the landscape at the port since the county took ownership in July. Asbestos is being removed from a fourth building before it can be torn down. There is still significant cleanup required before any type of development occurs.

The Friends of the Waccamaw Library are pleased to announce



The 2024 Litchfield Tea and Poetry Series



Monthly presentations through April, each featuring thought-provoking poets with S.C. connections.



Programs are free, open to the public and start at 10 a.m. at the Waccamaw Library.



New this year: an Open Mic event will follow the featured poet's presentation at every session.

March 14: Hastings Hensel



A resident of Murrells Inlet, Hensel's poetry collections include "Ballyhoo," "Winter Inlet," and chapbook "Control Burn," which won the Iron Horse Literary Review Single-Author Competition. Mary Jo Salter counts Hensel as "one of the most accomplished young poets now writing in this country." Hensel earned his MFA from John Hopkins University and is a senior lecturer in English at Coastal Carolina University. He is owner of River Reader Kayaking.

April 11: Richard Allen Taylor



Taylor, of Myrtle Beach, is author of three poetry collections, including "Armed and Luminous" and the recently published "Letters to Karen Carpenter." His poems, articles and reviews have appeared in numerous publications. His work has been described as "traversing the music of his universe while navigating the complexities of love, loss, aging and dying" with "poems created not as comic relive from sorrow, but as natural reflections on life, myth and art."

First Friday

with Georgetown County



New episodes on the first Friday of every month. Join us as we discuss topics important to residents of our county. Listen on YouTube or anywhere you normally stream and download podcasts.

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

Watch at [YouTube.com/GtCountySC](https://www.youtube.com/GtCountySC).

Library readies for spring reopening



Renovations at the Georgetown Library are complete and library staff is preparing for the hard work of getting the building ready for a spring reopening. Boxes of books have already been moved back into the building and staff and volunteers are planning to begin unpacking and reshelving them on March 11. Furniture still has to be moved in, but the building is on track for a reopening in April. Landscaping work has also been complete, thanks to volunteers from the Friends of the Georgetown Library. Prior to this, the 34-year-old library had not had any renovation since 2007. Updates include new lighting, flooring and shelving; an altered layout; a 3,120-foot expansion that will include an enhanced auditorium; and more. The renovations are funded through a 1.4 million bequest from the late Jean Fournoy Moody, \$869,425 in capital project sales tax dollars and \$568,502 in American Rescue Plan Act funds.

League begins post-season play



Georgetown County's youth basketball league just finished regular play and is getting ready to begin tournament play on March 11, with the Championship scheduled for March 14. More than 400 children participated on teams across the county this season, and numbers are growing in older age groups, which means kids are staying with the program longer. An overall increase in the number of girls participating was also seen this season across all age groups. "Our kids are developing their skills better, largely due to the fantastic job our volunteer coaches are doing," said Recreation Manager Jason Walters. Volunteer coaches are always needed for recreation programs.



Friends of the Georgetown Library

**SPRING
COMMUNITY
YARD
SALE**

**MARCH 16th,
8:00AM - 12:00PM**

New County Courthouse Parking Lot
(RAIN DATE: MARCH 23rd)

Sellers: \$15 single space, \$20 double.

Register online at www.myfogl.org/projects

Food • Fun • Fellowship

**PALMETTO
GIVING DAY
ORGANIZATIONAL FAIR**

Palmetto Giving Day is a 36-Hour Online Giving Event for Georgetown County, SC. It is an awesome opportunity to show our community what matters to you!

**Meet the
nonprofit
Organizations!**

March 21 • 4:30-6:30pm

Beck Recreational Center
2030 W. Church Street • Georgetown, SC 29440

Join us and learn more about the participating nonprofit organizations that you can support on Palmetto Giving Day, scheduled for May 7-8, 2024!

RSVP
OrgFair.rsvpify.com



Free!
at the library

<http://shushcon.com>



The Grand Strand's Premier Game Convention



RPGs | Board Games
Minis | Geeky Crafting
CCGs | Tea Dueling
VR | Video Games
Cosplay | Swap Meet



Waccamaw Neck Branch Library
41 St Pauls Place, Pawleys Island

Ellis

Continued from Front Page

for Tropical Storm Idalia as the storm trekked across Georgetown County impacting inland and coastal communities with heavy rainfall, strong winds and storm surge. Although damage was noted throughout the county, federal assistance was unlikely for residents and business owners. Ellis quickly activated the Winyah Bay Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) to respond and provide support to those impacted within our community. This response came only weeks after Georgetown County Emergency Management and the Winyah Bay COAD collaborated to conduct a disaster response and recovery tabletop exercise using a tropical cyclone scenario.

With our community's susceptibility to numerous hazards that could impact the continuity of communications, Ellis developed a strategy to build deployable satellite communications capabilities to support emergency communications following a catastrophic disaster. The county used grant funds to purchase the necessary components to build eight deployable satellite communications kits and secured a satellite talkgroup dedicated to Georgetown County.

A non-tropical coastal low-pressure system had severe impacts on part of Georgetown County on Dec. 17. As conditions began to deteriorate on Dec. 17, it became clear that the rainfall forecast was drastically underestimated. With several streets flooded in the City of Georgetown, along with numerous rescues being conducted, Ellis attempted to make his way to the county's Emergency Operations Center to assist the City's response efforts. Unable to access the EOC due to flooded roadways, he met with City personnel and set up a makeshift EOC in their conference room. As the heavy rainfall continued, at a rate of nearly 4 inches per hour, the fire station began to take on floodwater, forcing personnel to evacuate. Access to the county EOC was finally achieved and response coordination was reengaged with city and county personnel. Ellis coordinated with numerous Emergency Support Functions in a virtual environment due to the travel hazards, and county personnel supported the response in the City of Georgetown until the situation stabilized hours later.

On the following morning, the county implemented continuity of operations procedures due to major flooding impacting several county offices. Multiple departments were relocated due to flooding from the previous day's storm. Damage assessments were initiated and the Winyah Bay COAD was once again activated to support the unmet needs of residents impacted by the severe flooding event.

Additionally, Emergency Management opened its doors to provide office space for the City of Georgetown Fire Department's administrative staff while they worked to remediate the impacts of nearly a foot of floodwater from their headquarters station, providing temporary office space in the EOC. Recovery efforts are ongoing after the storm dumped a previously unheard of 14.47 inches of rain on the county in just a few hours.

Ellis was hired as Georgetown County Emergency Manager in the summer of 2019 and promoted shortly thereafter. He earned his bachelor's degree from Francis Marion University while serving as a part-time and volunteer firefighter in Mullins. He continued to serve in the fire service in Marion after graduation, where he became the Marion County Director of Emergency Management. He then joined the S.C. Emergency Management Division as one of six Regional Emergency Managers, covering eight counties, including Georgetown. He was recognized as the S.C. Emergency Management Division's Employee of the Year in January of 2019.

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



SERVICE AWARDS



Betty Bowers of the Library, right, was the longest-serving employee recognized at this year's Employee Service Awards Luncheon, with 45 years of service. She is pictured with County Administrator Angela Christian. Find a full list of honorees at gtcounty.org.



Marilynn Lance-Robb of the Library and Karis Langston of Finance with 25 years.



Matthew Grayson of the Sheriff's Office, 40 years.



Nicki Fulmore of the Clerk of Court's Office, 30 years.



Employees with 20 years of service.



David Geney of County Fire-EMS and Susie Tuck of 911, 35 years.



Employees with 15 years of service.



Employees with 10 years of service.



Employees with five years of service.