



GEORGETOWN COUNTY MONTHLY

A publication for our residents and visitors

DECEMBER 2025



'Tis the Season

Yuletide Home Tour returns with new stop and historic highlights

The Friends of the Georgetown Library are inviting residents and visitors alike to celebrate the season with a beloved local tradition: The 23rd annual Yuletide Home Tour, set for 1-5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13,

The event offers a rare opportunity to step inside beautifully decorated homes, churches and museums throughout Georgetown, all decked out in their holiday finest. This year's tour features 12 stops, including three homes that have never before been part of the event.

"We always try to bring in new and different homes each year," said Bob Willey, president of the Friends of the Georgetown Library. "Three of the homes on this year's tour are brand new to the lineup, and none of the homes from last year will repeat, so there's plenty of variety."

Among this year's most exciting additions is Bethel AME Church, which will reopen to the public for the first time in a decade. The historic church, which dates back to 1863, has deep roots in Georgetown's story. It was once a stop on local history tours and holds a special connection as the home church of former First Lady Michelle Obama's grandparents.

"It's such a beautiful church with an incredible history," Willey said. "They haven't been part of the tour since the tragedy at Mother Emanuel in Charleston, but the new pastor, Rev. Davis, has been very open and enthusiastic →] Continued on Page 3



Images from previous Yuletide Home Tour events. A different batch of homes decked out for the season is on display annually.

Inside this issue:



Sgt. Brian Delval was of the Sheriff's Office was honored with the Hero's Award.



GOAT program celebrates successful 2025, gets ready for bigger things in 2026.



County Council recognized winners of its annual holiday card contest this month.

Delval receives Hero's Award



Sgt. Brian Delval, third from left, was presented the Hero's Award.

Georgetown County Sheriff's Office Sgt. Brian Delval has been named the 2025 Hero's Award recipient by the Grand Strand Community Law Enforcement Appreciation Committee.

Delval was recognized during the committee's annual awards dinner at the Sands Ocean Club in Myrtle Beach earlier this month, where he was honored alongside outstanding officers from Horry County, Conway, North Myrtle Beach and Surfside Beach. He was nominated by the Sheriff's Office in recognition of his 19 years of dedicated service and for his actions earlier this year, when he located a resident in distress and performed lifesaving measures that helped save the individual's life.

The event also included a special presentation by the group Quilts of Valor, which awarded patriotic, handmade quilts to two military veterans within the Sheriff's Office: Sgt. Sean Seebode and Deputy Hank Betts.



Deputy Hank Betts, top, and Sgt. Sean Seebode, above, are wrapped in Quilts of Valor.

Cops on the Coop event raises funds for Special Olympics



The Georgetown County Sheriff's Office held its first ever Cops on the Coop event on December 5 at Chick-fil-A in Murrells Inlet to raise funds for Special Olympics of South Carolina, and the community really came through! Despite rain and chilly temperatures, the event raised \$4,682 for the special athletes in our area. Many thanks to Chick-fil-A for being fantastic hosts.

About this publication

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 Georgetown County Monthly.

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 our newsletter on our website at www.gtcounty.org/newsroom 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.

→] Yuletide Home Tour

about increasing community involvement. We're thrilled to welcome them back."

In addition to the homes and churches, four of Georgetown's five museums will be featured: the Kaminski House Museum, the Georgetown County Museum, the Gullah Museum and the S.C. Maritime Museum. Prince George Winyah Parish Hall will also be part of the route.

Willey said the timing of the event — from 1-5 p.m. — is designed to encourage visitors to make a day of it in historic Georgetown. "We want people to come early for lunch, enjoy the tour, and then stay for dinner downtown," he said. "And with the ice-skating rink returning this year on the same day, there's plenty to do for families as well."

The City of Georgetown will have an ice rink set up from noon to 8 p.m. in Maritime Park on Front Street.

Tickets for the Yuletide Home Tour are \$25 per person or \$20 for members of any Friends group within the Georgetown County Library system. Admission is free for library employees. Tickets are available at all county library branches or online at myfogl.org/yuletidetour.

Last year's tour drew about 770 participants and raised more than \$13,000 to support programs at the Georgetown Library. Proceeds fund a wide range of activities for children, teens and adults.

"The Yuletide Home Tour is our biggest fundraiser of the year," Willey said. "It allows us to support programs that inspire reading and creativity for all ages — but especially for children and youth. That's what it's all about."

The Friends group saw strong early interest, with more than 500 tickets already sold. Willey said he expects this year's attendance to top 800, with visitors traveling from



Twelve stops are included on this year's Yuletide Home Tour.

across South Carolina and neighboring states.

"It has become not just a local event, but one that really draws people in and benefits the whole community," he said. "You get to enjoy the beauty of the season, experience some of Georgetown's most special places, and help our libraries continue the great work they do. It's a win for everyone."

The will also be a free holiday market open at the library from from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit myfogl.org/yuletidetour.

Winter Wonderland
A POLAR EXPRESS ADVENTURE

12.20.2025 2pm - 5pm

Polar Express Movie Screening
Jojo's Christmas Clicks with Santa Dee
Sara's Hot Chocolate & Popcorn Bar
Mrs. Miller's Christmas Pretzels
Silvana's Sweet Station
Mary's Merry Meatballs Bistro
Triah's Tinsel Town Treasures Gift Shop
Ashley's Christmas Crafts Stations
Sam & Elves Gaming Workshop

Georgetown Library Auditorium
405 Cleland Street, Georgetown, SC 29440
(843) 545-3311

Georgetown County
Main Library

Christmas Ornament
Diamond Painting

Thursday Dec. 18th, 2:00 to 4:00
and
Tuesday Dec. 23rd, 4:00 to 6:00
Auditorium
Ages 13+

FOGL
FRIENDS OF THE GEORGETOWN COUNTY LIBRARY

843-545-3388

GEORGETOWN COUNTY, SC

GOAT program celebrates record-breaking year, prepares for 2026

Georgetown County's Outdoor Adventure Trails program, better known as GOAT, closed out its second year with strong participation and mileage totals. Parks and Recreation staff said the program's second full year brought major growth, new events and an increasing level of enthusiasm among residents exploring the county's trails on foot, bike and water.

"We had a really good year," said TL Staub, the program's coordinator. "The numbers show huge growth, but more than that, people are really getting into it. They're hiking, biking, paddling and pushing themselves in ways they didn't think they could."

The program encourages participants to log outdoor miles of all types, with milestone recognitions for Fit GOATs and Iron GOATs. In 2025, participants logged a combined 46,966 miles, including 30,430 miles of hiking, walking and running; 15,715 miles of biking; and 821 miles of paddling.

Participation increased significantly this year. A total of 153 people registered for the program, and 100 actively logged mileage. That represents a 43% increase over 2024's 70 participants. Forty-one percent of this year's group were first-time participants, while 59 percent returned from previous years. Women made up 67 percent of participants, compared to near-even gender distribution last year. Seventy-three percent of participants lived in Georgetown County, 15 percent lived elsewhere in South Carolina and 11 percent were from out of state.

A record number of participants earned GOAT mileage recognitions in 2025. Thirty-three people reached Iron GOAT status by logging more than 500 miles. That



includes eight Iron GOAT-Elite finishers with more than 1,500 miles, two Iron GOAT-Pro participants with 1,000 to 1,499 miles, and 23 Iron GOATs with 500 to 999 miles. Another 54 people earned Fit GOAT recognition by logging 100 to 499 miles, including 16 Fit GOAT-Pro finishers. Altogether, 87% of

all participants reached either Fit GOAT or Iron GOAT status. "Some of the elite hikers logged more than 1,500 miles," Staub said. "That's like walking from here to New York and back."

To continue improving the program, the department plans to introduce a new digital tracking platform called Challenge Hound when the 2026 GOAT season begins Jan. 1. The app will allow participants to log miles manually or through their phones, compare progress on a live dashboard and participate in multiple challenges at once. Staub said staff are currently testing the system. "It'll give people a visual of where they stand and help them stay motivated," he said. "We think it's going to take the program to the next level."


The county's goals for the coming year include growing participation, expanding paddling and hiking opportunities, strengthening partnerships and potentially finding ways to connect GOAT to the county's employee health initiative.

Staub said the program is quickly becoming part of the county's culture of outdoor recreation and community wellness. "It's only going to grow from here," he said. "The more people get outside, explore and challenge themselves, the better it is for our whole community."


YOU'RE INVITED!

Please join Georgetown County & the Morant Family for the dedication of

JOHNNY MORANT HIGHWAY



Friday, December 26 at 11 a.m.
Location: The Intersection of Exodus Drive and Highway 701. Reception to follow.



Georgetown County Main Library

Jukebox Bingo: Christmas Carol Edition

Monday Dec. 22nd, 2:30 to 3:30
Auditorium

Come to play jukebox bingo and picture bingo. Four games with prizes will be held.
All ages welcome.

Registration required.

To register, contact smullins@gtcounty.org or 843-545-3388




Waccamaw Library to host writing workshop series in 2026

The Waccamaw Library will kick off a new yearlong writing workshop series on Thursday, Jan. 22 with a free session on the publishing process. The workshop is designed for writers working to publish their first book and will be led by Linda Ketron, founder and director of CLASS Publishing. Ketron has published more than 75 books across multiple genres during the past 13 years.

The January session is the first of eight monthly workshops scheduled from January through August. Each gathering will focus on a different aspect of writing — from getting started to getting published — and will be led by a published author. Sessions begin at 10 a.m. and last about an hour and a half.

The series will cover a variety of genres, including memoir, fiction, creative nonfiction, magazine writing and several forms of poetry. All workshops are free and open to the public, thanks to support from the Friends of the Waccamaw Library. Space is limited. To register, contact Daniel Cross Turner at dtturner@gtcounty.org.

2026 Workshop Schedule

• **Jan. 22 — The Publishing Process**, led by Linda Ketron, founder and director of CLASS Publishing. Ketron also created the CLASS programs and the Moveable Feast literary luncheons, which have connected more than 100,000 readers since 1998. She received the 2025 Mims-Talmadge Literary Advocacy Award from the South Carolina Academy of Authors.

• **Feb. 27 — Memoir Writing**. Emily Dunlap Carter, author of "A Spork in the Road: Reflections on the Journey," will discuss crafting memoir rooted in family, resilience and storytelling. On Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6 p.m., Carter and her husband, musician John Carter, will perform at the library as Chick 'N' Biscuit for the Friends of the Waccamaw Library Musicians Series.

• **March 26 — Haiku**. Sylvia Kelly, author of "Haiku from the Heart: Extra Love Inside" and "The Upward Climb: Into the Light of Day," will lead a session on writing in the traditional haiku form.

• **April 16 — Poetry**. Hastings Hensel, poet and Coastal Carolina University instructor, is the author of "Ballyhoo" and "Winter Inlet." His magazine work frequently appears in South Carolina Living, covering topics from shrimping and crabbing to fossil hunting, rodeos and local folklore. He is currently editing "The Winyah Bay Watershed: A Literary Field Guide."

• **May 21 — Creative Nonfiction**. Daniel Cross Turner, author of five books including "Riding Light" and "Coast Lines," will lead a workshop on creative nonfiction. His work has appeared in Birmingham Poetry Review, Hub City, Five Points and other publications. Turner earned his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt University and taught writing and literature for two decades.

• **June 18 — Poetry**. Marlanda Dekine, a native of Plantersville and the first Poet Laureate of the Georgetown County Library System, will teach a session on crafting poetry that weaves memory, ancestry and the present moment. Dekine is the author of "Thresh & Hold" and has been published in Poetry Magazine, Orion and multiple anthologies. She will lead a second session **July 23**.

• **Aug. 20 — Poetic Forms**. Led by Daniel Cross Turner.



2026
GEORGETOWN COUNTY
POLAR PLUNGE
OCEANFRONT LITCHFIELD INN
1 NORRIS DRIVE, PAWLEYS ISLAND
2.7.26
Registration 10 am | Costume contest 11 am
Plunge at 11:30 am




When you join the **Polar Plunge**, you help athletes with intellectual disabilities to experience the life-changing benefits of participating in **Special Olympics**, at no cost to themselves or their families.


Donate
or raise \$50 and take the plunge with us!
<https://www.classy.org/campaign/2026-georgetown-county-polar-plunge/c724519>




For more information contact:
Lt. James Ketcham at Georgetown County Sheriff's Office
jketcham@gtcounty.org or 843-546-5102



2026 Live Music!



>Saturday, January 31 @7PM
Peter Fletcher
Master Classical Guitarist



"Fletcher's performances bear not a trace of strain or awkwardness.... This is mellow playing, and melody is king, but rhythmic vitality is never sacrificed, phrasing is precise, and harmonies always retain a jewel-like clarity."
— *Fanfare on Peter Fletcher*

Free & Open to All!

Georgetown Library / 405 Cleland St. / Georgetown, SC

20th annual Litchfield Poetry Series showcases coastal S.C. poets

When the Litchfield Poetry Series returns to the Waccamaw Library for its twentieth year in January, the spotlight will be on poets who live and write along the South Carolina coast: Ed Gold (Charleston), Sylvia Kelly (Pawleys Island) and Yvette R. Murray (Charleston).

"Living on the South Carolina coast is poetry," said current series director Daniel Cross Turner. "The sun rising and setting over swaying cordgrass in the saltmarshes, the ages-old bald cypress and bearded oaks lining tannin-dark rivers, the stunning apparition of herons, egrets and storks lighting and alighting. Every day on the coast fills with inspiration."

The 2026 series reading dates will be Jan. 15 with Gold, Feb. 26 with Kelly and March 12 with Murray. The sessions begin at 10 a.m. This year's series will also feature three open mic sessions immediately following the scheduled poet readings. For the open mics, attendees are invited to share one of their own poems. Participants are asked to keep their reading to a single one-page poem. Readings also include audience Q&A and book-signings.

All programs are free and open to the public. The series is sponsored by the Friends of the Waccamaw Library, as well as by the Poetry Society of South Carolina, which is in its 105th year of fostering the craft of poetry across the state. The Waccamaw Library is located at 41 St. Paul Place, Pawleys Island, SC 29585.

The Litchfield Poetry Series was co-founded in 2006 by the late poet Susan Laughter Meyers and CLASS Publishing owner Linda Ketron.

"Susan and I resumed a program, The Blue Heron Poetry Series, that was led by Cliff Saunders for five years," Ketron recalled. "Susan and Libby teamed up to organize the series, doing a splendid job until Susan's unfortunate passing in 2017. Cliff would then return to ably co-host with Libby Bernardin for a couple of years. From 2019 until 2024, Libby worked alongside poet and scholar Daniel Cross Turner, who is now leading the Litchfield Poetry Series. Our goal was and is to provide a forum for those to whom words have both meaning and music."

Over the past 20 seasons, the series has fostered the work of promising emerging writers alongside well-known voices in the poetry field. Notable writers who have been featured readers for the series, to name but a few, include Paul Allen, Billy Baldwin, Kate Daniels, Richard García, Ashley Mace Havird, David Havird, Hastings Hensel, Gary Jackson, Ashley M. Jones, John Lane, J. Drew Lanham, Ray McManus, Ed Madden, Glenis Redmond, Emily Rosko, Adam Vines, Marjory Wentworth.

As Saunders noted, "The Litchfield Poetry Series continues to meet the demand for poetic expression and inspiration in the Lowcountry area." With erstwhile poet Bernardin, Turner edited *Coast Lines*, a recent anthology of poetry and photography that explores diverse visions of the South Carolina coast in works by 50 contemporary poets, several of whom have participated in the Litchfield Poetry Series over the years, including Gilbert Allen, Marcus Amaker, Al Black, Tim Conroy, Marlanda Dekine, Curtis Derrick, Jo Angela Edwins, Jessica K. Hylton, Miho Kinnas, Eugene Platt, Lawrence Rhu, Elizabeth Robin,

Cassie Premo Steele and Richard Allen Taylor. Turner became close to Bernardin while the two collaborated on organizing the series.

"Like so many others, I grew to love Libby Bernardin the person as much as I admired Libby Bernardin the poet. Her life is as graceful as her lines," Turner said. "She has impeccable taste in poetry and brought in a wealth of excellent poets for the series. I'm doing my best to carry forward Libby's wonderful momentum."

With regard to the featured poets for the 2006 series, Ed Gold is a graduate of the Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminars who taught for many years at the University of Maryland. In addition to his new collection *Loveship*, he has two other chapbooks—*Owl* and *Sundown*—and poems in *Ekphrastic Review*, *Petigru Review*, *Think*, *Kakalak*, and elsewhere. For the Poetry Society of South Carolina, Gold conducts the Skylark annual poetry contest for high school students. He lives in Charleston with his wife Amy and their dog Edie.

Sylvia Kelly is the author of two collections of haiku-based poetry: *The Upward Climb: Into the Light of Day* and *Haiku from the Heart*. Before retiring to the South Carolina coast, Kelly was a nurse who served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps Reserves and a former security guard through the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. In addition to writing poems, she also loves being a wife, mother and grandmother.

Yvette R. Murray is an award-winning poet and the author of the poetry collection *Hush, Puppy* (2023) as well as a new children's book, *Celebrate We Gullah Geechee* (2025). She has been published in *Chestnut Review*, *Aunt Chloe*, *Emrys Journal*, *Litmosphere*, and *A Gathering Together*, among other venues. Murray is the 2022 Susan Laughter Meyers Weymouth Fellow, a 2021 Best New Poet selection, a Watering Hole Fellow, and a Pushcart Prize nominee.



Mahjong

Tuesday December 16th

1:00 - 3:00

Auditorium



Georgetown County Main Library

843-545-3388



Morant is Employee of the Quarter

Maya Morant of Georgetown County Economic Development has been selected as the county's Employee of the Quarter for the final quarter of this year. The award recognizes her exceptional leadership, professionalism and steady commitment to her department during a period of significant transition.



Maya Morant

Morant's nomination was submitted by Economic Development Director Kelly Robertson-Slagle, who credited her with keeping the department operating seamlessly in recent months. When the department was without a director, Morant stepped up to "hold down the fort," managing daily operations, supporting key partners and ensuring essential projects continued moving forward without interruption.

"Maya has been an invaluable asset to Economic Development," Robertson-Slagle said. "Her leadership, dedication and professionalism made it possible for the department to continue its work at a very high level, even in the midst of major change."

Morant also played a central role in onboarding Robertson-Slagle into her new position, providing steady guidance and clear communication as the department welcomed new leadership.

"On a personal level, Maya has been extraordinary," Robertson-Slagle said. "Her patience, knowledge and willingness to help have made a meaningful difference in my transition—both as a new director and as a new full-time resident of Georgetown County."

Highly regarded across South Carolina's economic development network, Morant is known for her professionalism, integrity and relationship-building skills. Her work has strengthened partnerships with the S.C. Department of Commerce and helped raise Georgetown County's profile throughout the region.

Her commitment to service extends well beyond her official role. Morant is active with several community organizations and nonprofits, as well as the County's Morale Committee, and is recognized for consistently stepping in wherever needed to support colleagues and partners.

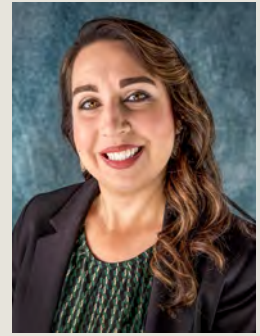
She has also played a key role in the county's minority business programming, helping expand opportunities for under-represented entrepreneurs through outreach, coordination and trust-building within the small-business community.

"Maya exemplifies the values and work ethic that drive meaningful economic development," Robertson-Slagle said.

Morant will be officially recognized by County Council at its meeting on Jan. 13.

Silver named region director

Georgetown County Purchasing Officer Nancy Silver was elected and sworn in as the new Region 5 Director for the South Carolina Association of Governmental Purchasing Officials (SCAGPO) at last month's annual forum. As Region 5 Director, she will serve as a liaison between the SCAGPO Board and Region 5 agencies, which include Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion, Marlboro, Williamsburg and Clarendon counties. She'll also help plan regional charitable and social events in the year ahead. Earlier this year, Silver was also featured in SCAGPO's quarterly newsletter, *Buyways*, as the Director Spotlight for the quarter.



Nancy Silver

Public Services Administration building has a new address



Georgetown County Public Services has a new director and a new building for its administrative offices. But don't worry, it hasn't gone far! In fact, it just moved into the building right next door on Screven Street. It's now located in the old Red Cross building.

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.

First Thursday speaker series announces winter/spring lineup

The popular Friends of the Waccamaw Library (FOWL) 1st Thursday Speaker Series returns for another anticipated run in Winter/Spring 2026. Though subjects of presentations are eclectic, most highlight a facet of local or South Carolina Lowcountry culture, such as our area's diverse histories; elements of our coastal ecology; and the unique language, customs, literature and arts inspired by our region.

Presentations will be held in the DeBordieu-Cross Auditorium at the Waccamaw Library, located at 41 St. Paul Place, Pawleys Island. All 1st Thursday events begin at 10 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month and are free and open to the public. Arrive early to enjoy piano music performed by the talented Tom Santopietro. If you miss a presentation, videos are available afterward on the [Georgetown County Library YouTube channel](#).

The Winter/Spring 2026 lineup features an engaging range of speakers and topics, including author David G. Hodges on how rope hammocks became a signature feature of Pawleys Island history (Feb. 5); South Carolina Maritime Museum Curator Justin McIntyre on how the Clyde Steamship Company linked coastal South Carolina to the larger world in the early 1900s (March 5); South Carolina Institute for Archaeology and Anthropology Research Professor Steven D. Smith on how General Francis Marion gained crucial support from local inhabitants of Snow's Island during the Revolutionary War (April 2); Open Space Institute Development and Community Relations Manager Erin Pate on new developments with the Black River Initiative, which is a 70-mile-long network of recreational water trails that connects 12 local, state, and private parks across Georgetown County (May 7); and Former Co-Director of the Baruch Institute for South Carolina Studies at Hobcaw Barony, Lynn Hanson on the history of enslaved

communities at Hobcaw (June 4).

Professor Smith's presentation on Francis Marion will be one of a series of presentations as part of "A Glorious Cause: South Carolina and the American Revolution: A Public History Initiative of the Georgetown County Library." The project will illustrate for adults the Palmetto State's exceptional role in securing American independence while exploring the colonial society that shaped the rising nation's thinkers and fighters. The project is made possible by a \$39,300 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services administered by the South Carolina State Library. This federal funding will cover 66% of the total costs of the project, while \$22,100 (or 34%) of the total costs will be financed by non-government sources.

Specific titles and dates for Winter/Spring 1st Thursdays are included below:

- Feb. 5 at 10 a.m.: David G. Hodges, (Author), "In the Sway: The Fascinating History of Pawleys Island Hammocks"
- March 5 at 10 a.m.: Justin McIntyre (Curator/South Carolina Maritime Museum), "The Best Way South: The Clyde Steamship Co. in South Carolina"
- April 2 at 10 a.m.: Steven D. Smith (Research Professor/South Carolina Institute for Archaeology & Anthropology), "Francis Marion & the Snow's Island Community: Myth, History, & Archaeology" *Part of "A Glorious Cause: South Carolina and the American Revolution" / In partnership with Georgetown 250
- May 7 at 10 a.m.: Erin Pate (Development & Community Relations Manager/Open Space Institute), "Black Magic: New Developments with the Black River Initiative"
- June 4 at 10 a.m.: Dr. Lynn Hanson (Former Co-Director/Baruch Institute for South Carolina Studies), "Enslaved Communities at Hobcaw Barony: Insights from Research."



2026 CLASSIC FILM SERIES

With Introductions + Q&A **Fridays at 2:00 p.m.**

- > Friday, January 23
The French Connection (1971)
- > Friday, January 30
Out of the Past (1947)
- > Friday, February 6
Heaven Can Wait (1978)
- > Friday, February 13
The Third Man (1949)
- > Friday, February 20
Kramer vs. Kramer (1979)
- > Friday, February 27
Charade (1963)
- > Friday, March 6
Best in Show (2000)
- > Friday, March 13
Marathon Man (1976)

Free & Open to all!

HOLLYWOOD

Waccamaw Library . 41 St Paul Place . Pawleys Island, SC



2026 Musicians Series!

- > Thursday, January 15 @6PM:
Dan Sachs, "Acoustic Classics" 
- > Thursday, January 22 @6PM:
Pam Ackerman, "Jazz & Cabaret" 
- > Thursday, February 12 @6PM:
Pawleys Island Ladies Ensemble,
"Chorale Celebration" 

Free & Open to All!

- > Thursday, February 26 @6PM:
Chick 'N' Biscuit, "Words 'N' Music" 
- > Thursday, March 12 @6PM:
Rich Johnson, "The Best of The Eagles,
Jimmy Buffett, & The Grateful Dead" 
- > Thursday, March 26 @6PM:
Pawleys Island Concert Band Jazz Band,
"Jazz in the Stacks" 

Waccamaw Library / 41 St. Paul Place / Pawleys Island, SC

Winter holidays bring fire risks; Fire-EMS shares safety tips

As colder weather arrives and holiday celebrations get underway, Georgetown County Fire-EMS is reminding residents that winter traditions and seasonal activities can also bring increased fire risks if proper precautions aren't taken.

Assistant Fire Chief Aaron Bostic says many holiday-related fires stem from everyday activities that people don't typically consider dangerous—until something goes wrong.

Christmas trees are a common concern this time of year, particularly live trees. While real trees can be safely enjoyed, they require regular care. Keeping a live tree well-watered helps prevent it from drying out, which significantly reduces the risk of fire. Dry trees can ignite quickly, producing intense heat and heavy smoke in a matter of seconds. Residents are also encouraged to place trees away from heat sources and to turn off decorative lights when leaving the house or going to bed.

Electrical safety is another important consideration during the holidays, when homes are often filled with lights, decorations and seasonal displays. Fire-EMS recommends using UL-listed surge protectors rather than basic multi-plug adapters and avoiding overloading outlets. Surge protectors should be used properly and not connected to one another. Space heaters, which draw a high amount of power, should never be plugged into surge protectors or extension cords.

Heating equipment itself is one of the leading causes of winter fires. In Georgetown County, many residents rely on non-traditional heating sources such as kerosene heaters and wood-burning stoves. While effective, these systems require careful use and regular maintenance. Kerosene heaters should only be refueled outdoors using the correct



fuel, and never while the heater is hot. Spilled fuel can ignite quickly and lead to serious house fires. Wood-burning stoves and fireplaces should have chimneys inspected and cleaned regularly to prevent dangerous buildup.

Carbon monoxide is another hidden hazard during colder months. Homes that use gas appliances, gas heat or fuel-burning devices should be equipped with working carbon monoxide alarms in addition to smoke detectors. These alarms can provide early warning of a potentially deadly buildup of carbon monoxide gas.

Outdoor cooking and celebrations also bring seasonal risks. Turkey fryers, popular around Thanksgiving and the holidays, should always be used outdoors, well away from buildings and overhangs. Overfilling fryers with oil is a common mistake that can cause oil to spill over when the turkey is added, igniting flames almost instantly. Measuring oil levels ahead of time can help prevent this danger.

Fireworks, often used during New Year's celebrations, can cause serious burns and fires if used improperly. Even sparklers burn at extremely high temperatures and should be closely supervised, especially around children. Fireworks should only be used in open areas, away from homes and dry vegetation. Dry winter conditions can allow sparks to quickly ignite brush or forest fires, which remain a serious concern in Georgetown County year-round.

Cooking fires also increase during the holidays as families prepare large meals and entertain guests. Fire-EMS urges residents to stay attentive while cooking, avoid distractions and keep flammable items away from stoves and ovens.

Cooking fires also increase during the holidays as families prepare large meals and entertain guests. Fire-EMS urges residents to stay attentive while cooking, avoid distractions and keep flammable items away from stoves and ovens.

Finally, officials remind residents to be mindful of lithium-ion batteries found in phones, laptops and other electronic devices. Devices should be charged in well-ventilated areas, away from beds, couches or other flammable materials. Overheating or malfunctioning batteries can cause fires, particularly when devices are left plugged in for long periods.

Fire officials stress that working smoke alarms remain one of the most important fire safety tools in any home. Smoke alarms should be tested regularly and installed on every level of the home and near sleeping areas.

"Most people who experience a house fire never expect it to happen," Bostic said. "The holidays are a busy time, and it's easy to get distracted. Taking a few extra precautions can help keep families safe."

Residents are encouraged to make fire safety part of their holiday preparations so they can enjoy the season safely.



<< Numbers >>
TO KNOW

(All begin with area code 843)

- Directory, 545-3063
- 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
- Public Works, 545-3438
- Probate Judge, 545-3077
- Recycling/Solid Waste
545-3463
- Register of Deeds, 545-3088
- Sheriff, 546-5102
- Stormwater, 545-3524
- Treasurer, 545-3102

P.O. Box 421270
129 Screven Street



CELEBRATING THE SEASON

Georgetown County Council recognized winners of its annual holiday card contest on Dec. 9. First-place winner Brianna Gaspardo, a 12th-grader at Waccamaw High School, and second-place winner Carter Altman, a first-grader at Andrews Elementary School, are pictured with Chairman Clint Elliott and Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce representatives

Beth Stedman and Mark Stevens. The Chamber sponsored the prizes for the contest. Third-place winner Trinity Keeney, an 11th-grader at Andrews High School, was unable to attend. The county received more than 500 entries from K-12 students this year. Winners were selected through blind judging by a panel of county staff. The first-place artwork will appear on the front of the county's official 2025 holiday card.



From left are first, second and third place winning entries.

Honoring the legacy of Florene Linnen



Georgetown County Council Chairman Clint Elliott presents a framed copy of a Resolution recognizing the contributions of the late Florene Linnen to her family during Council's Dec. 9 meeting. The resolution honors Linnen's life, legacy and deep commitment to her community. A beloved mother, neighbor, and friend, Ms. Linnen was remembered as a steadfast presence whose compassion, leadership and quiet strength uplifted countless people throughout her life. Council members expressed their appreciation for the example she set through service and integrity, and offered heartfelt condolences to her loved ones — including her daughter, Tranja Simmons — as they continue to carry forward the values she embodied.