



The Georgetown County Chronicle



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

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Calendar

Nov. 26-27 – County offices are closed in observance of Thanksgiving.

Dec. 8 – Georgetown County Council meeting, 5:30 p.m. at Howard Auditorium. (Council only meets once this month.)

Dec. 15 – Holiday concert featuring Dr. Jill Trinka, 5:30 p.m. at facebook.com/gtlibrary.

Dec. 17 – Georgetown County Planning Commission Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at Howard Auditorium.

Dec. 24-28 – County offices are closed for the Christmas holiday.

Jan. 1 – County offices and facilities are closed for New Year's Day.

Check our social media pages for more online events!

Volume 9, Issue 2

November 2020

In midst of coronavirus spike, residents advised to take precautions during holiday celebrations

The number of reported COVID-19 cases has spiked drastically across the nation, and Georgetown County is no exception. Numbers are expected to increase further following the holidays and the gatherings of friends and family that will accompany them.

"We're about the same place now that we were in late June, when we were approaching our peak in mid-July," said Brandon Ellis, Georgetown County Emergency Services Director. "All along, we were expecting a fall surge and I think that's what we're seeing. There have been pretty steady increases over the past month in our daily case counts and I think we can expect to see that continue."

Georgetown County is currently classified as having a high incidence rate of COVID-19 cases, with about 17.5% of tests coming back positive — a 7% increase over two weeks. More than 1,300 tests were conduct-

ed during that period. The peak was 38.1 percent over the summer.

"I know we're going into the holiday season where we want to see family and friends, but we need to be considerate and limit that exposure the best we can in an effort to reduce the spread," Ellis said. "Make sure you are continuing to use masks and take precautionary actions, such as good hand and respiratory hygiene."

A mask ordinance remains in effect in Georgetown
See "COVID-19," Page 3



Richardson named as new county Planning Director

Holly Richardson, the longtime deputy director of Georgetown County's Planning and Zoning Department, has been promoted into the top spot. The announcement was made earlier this month after interviews for the position were completed.

With Richardson's long and exemplary history in the department, and her wealth of historical knowledge of the department and its ongoing, past and future projects, she was the best fit for this important role. She replaces Boyd Johnson, who retired from the position in September.



Holly Richardson

A resident of the Pawleys Island area, Richardson has spent most of her career in the county's Planning

Department. She joined the staff as a Level II Planner in 2005 and was promoted the following year to Chief Planner and acted as deputy to the director, a role she held for 14 years.

Prior to joining the county staff, she worked as director of development for the City of Georgetown's Building and Planning Department.

Richardson graduated Magna Cum Laude from Wofford College and earned a Master of Public Administration from the University of South Carolina. She also has a designation from the American Institute of Certified Planners.

County employees collected food, toys for community in November

Employees across Georgetown County government collected and donated a literal ton of food and two ambulance loads of toys to members of our community this month.

The Georgetown County Employee Morale Committee organized a food drive during the first part of November to collect nonperishable items for the food bank at Helping Hands of Georgetown. Staff at all levels and across all departments of county government came together to donate a total of 2,245 pounds of food, much of which will go to aid Helping Hands in ensuring families in need in the county are able to have a Thanksgiving meal this holiday season.

Later in the month, Georgetown County Fire-EMS staff held its third annual Fill the Ambulance toy drive to collect items for Toys for Tots. Over two days, they filled not one, but two ambulances with donations for children across our county.

"This year was great. We filled the ambulance up all the way from the front to the back from the floor to the ceiling twice," said Lt. Keith Ziegenhorn, who coordinates the annual toy drive. "Everybody was really giving this year. Some people came back two or three times to donate. I was anticipating a low year because of the pandemic, but it was just the opposite. It was the best year we've had yet. It was a very humbling



experience."

County Administrator Angela Christian commended staff for their willingness to give and help their community.

"This year has without a doubt been difficult for all of us in many ways, and devastating for some in our community. Jobs and income have been lost. Many families are struggling to put food on the table. Some of our employees' families are hurting as well, but despite things that may be happening in their own lives, they came together enthusiastically to help our community this holiday season. Their generosity and kind hearts make me proud to be a part of this team."



Get the Chronicle

At Georgetown County, we want our residents and property owners kept abreast of what's going on inside their local government. That's why we created the Georgetown County Chronicle. It's a vehicle for information about county services and events, important messages from county officials and behind-the-scenes glimpses at how government works.

You can find the Chronicle on our website at www.gtcounty.org or through our social media accounts. If you'd rather have it delivered to your inbox, e-mail jbroach@gtcounty.org with the subject line "send me the Chronicle."

That's also the place to send questions and comments about this newsletter and its content. We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

www.gtcounty.org

Happy Thanksgiving!

Georgetown County offices and facilities will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26 & 27, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.

Please note this excludes the Landfill and our community recycling centers, which will only be closed on Thursday. They will be open for normal operating hours on Friday.

We wish you a safe and happy Thanksgiving!



COVID-19

Continued from Front Page

County. The current ordinance is set to expire Dec. 9, but Council will consider a renewal of the ordinance at its Dec. 8 meeting.

As the holiday season approaches, the national Centers for Disease Control are encouraging people to consider modifying their holiday plans to help keep friends, families and communities healthy and safe. People diagnosed with or showing symptoms of COVID-19, or who have been exposed to COVID-19 should absolutely not host or participate in any in-person celebrations outside their home and/or with anyone who does not live in their home. Anyone at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should also avoid in-person celebrations, and especially avoid larger gatherings with people who do not live in their household.

The CDC recommends families and individuals consider small dinners with the people in their households this year. Those who would like to include others should consider delivering meals to friends, family and neighbors — especially those at higher risk of illness — in a way that avoids in-person contact. Virtual dinners are also a good option.

Avoiding after-Thanksgiving shopping crowds is also highly advisable. Shop online instead, or at small, local businesses that are unlikely to be crowded and that will benefit most from your business.

If your family traditions include watching sports, parades or movies, it is also a good idea to enjoy those from home this year.

Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others during this pandemic. If you must travel, short trips by car with members of your own household with no stops along the way are considered low risk. Those traveling longer distances by car should remember that many of their favorite “stopping places” may be closed. “Drive-through only” may also mean restrooms are closed and travelers should plan accordingly. If you must travel, be informed of the risks involved, including the current COVID-19 levels at your destination.

COVID-19 is spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person. **Some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.** The more closely you interact with others, the more people you interact with, and the longer those interactions, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. Therefore, doing things and spending time with people you live with is less risky than doing things and spending time with people not from your household.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov or scdhec.gov.



Annual holiday concert goes virtual

On Dec. 15, at 5:30 p.m., members of the public are invited to enjoy a free holiday concert featuring beautiful vocals and the lovely strains of a variety of instruments — the Appalachian dulcimer, Autoharp, guitar and keyboards—all played masterfully by Jill Trinka, Ph.D.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year’s concert will be streamed on the Georgetown County Library’s Facebook page at facebook.com/gtlibrary. The concert will have a special focus on traditional carols from the Southeastern United States and the Deep South, as well as Christmas music from Appalachia and the British Isles, with a classic holiday song or two included for “virtual” sing-a-longs!

Trinka’s performance is part of the Friends of the Waccamaw Library’s Musicians Series. The program is openly available to the public online on the Georgetown County Library Facebook page. A Facebook account is not necessary to watch the concert on the library’s Facebook page. If you miss the concert on Facebook, it will also be made available for viewing afterward on the Georgetown County Library YouTube channel.

When Trinka moved to Pawleys Island from St. Paul, Minn., in 2010, she did not know there was a university in Conway, and little imagined that she would be working there from 2011-2019 as a Professor of Music Education teaching elementary music methods, ear training, classroom instruments, world music, and American music. She is now retired from that post, but she continues to enjoy teaching workshops for music teachers, serving as an artist-in-residence in elementary schools and performing folk music concerts for adults and children. Passionate about keeping traditional folk songs alive, she has traveled throughout the United States and Canada for the past 40 years, promoting this music as a foundation for teaching music literacy skills. Trinka is a Master Teacher of the music education philosophy promoted by Hungarian composer, educator, and ethnomusicologist, Zoltán Kodály.

Trinka’s performances bring new life to the musical and cultural treasures of American folk music. Her books and CDs are published by GIA Music and include four CD and book sets: “My Little Rooster;” “Bought Me a Cat;” “John, the Rabbit;” and “The Little Black Bull;” a DVD: “Jill Trinka: The Bass Hall Children’s Concerts” (Ft. Worth, TX); and three collaborative CDs: “Had a Little Rooster,” “There’s a Hole in the Bucket,” and “Old Joe Clark.” Locally, Trinka has performed at Coastal Carolina University, Brookgreen Gardens’ Nights of Thousand Candles, Atalaya Christmas, and Surfside Sunday Serenades, among many other venues. She enjoys singing with the Carolina Master Chorale, when her schedule permits.



Jill Trinka

S.C. Women and the Right to Vote: The 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment



A lecture by Marjorie J. Spruill, Ph.D., author and distinguished Professor Emerita of History at the University of South Carolina

Dec. 3 at 10 a.m.

Livestreamed at
[Facebook.com/gtlibrary](https://facebook.com/gtlibrary)



2020 Election Results

Weaver wins first full term as Sheriff

In the last 12 months, Carter Weaver has appeared on the ballot four times. He first sought election to the office of Georgetown County Sheriff last December in a special primary election to fill the unexpired term of former Sheriff Lane Cribb, who passed away in office last summer. After winning two primaries and two general elections in such a short period, he will finally get a break after his victory in the Nov. 3 general election. He won't have to appear on the ballot again until 2024.

Weaver won a decisive victory over challenger Birt Adams this month in an election that saw a 78.5% turnout among voters in Georgetown County, and 37,035 ballots cast. Weaver won 64% of the vote and his was one of the few county races to be decided in the general election. Most were decided in the June primary.

Probate Judge Leigh Powers Boan, Clerk of Court Alma White, and County Council Members Everett Carolina Sr., Lillie Jean Johnson and Raymond Newton were all re-elected with no challenger on the Nov. 3 ballot. Bob Anderson will join County Council as the District 2 representative in January and Chase Ridgeway will be sworn in as the new coroner. Those races were both decided in the June primary, as were those of county Treasurer and Auditor. Miriam Mace will take office as the new Treasurer and Ken Baker as the new Auditor in July 2021.

Elected to the school board on Nov. 3 were Lynne B. Ford, Bill Gaskins, Randy Walker, Patti Hammel and Sandra L. Johnson.

For more information, visit scvotes.gov.

Walker named Employee of the Quarter



Vechini Walker, right, is pictured with Human Resources Director Walt Ackerman during a presentation before County Council.

Vechini Walker, Georgetown County's Payroll Supervisor, was named Georgetown County's Employee of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2020. She has been employed with the county for 21 years.

As Payroll Supervisor for the county, Walker's primary duty is to process payroll every other week. However, she also performs a host of other duties including producing a myriad of required reports for various state and federal agencies each month, balancing and paying insurance bills, producing W-2 forms and 1095-C forms, maintaining the county's timekeeping system, and much more. Though her plate is always full, she manages to achieve her mission without fail each and every month, and is always a reliable and dedicated employee.

The reason for her nomination, however, centered on her unwavering dedication and helpfulness to all members of the Georgetown County team, said her supervisor, Walt Ackerman, director of Administrative Services and Human Resources. Walker is constantly providing advice and guidance to other employees on all sorts of matters — everything from how to fill out a timesheet to how many deductions they should claim on a W-4. She does all this with a glad heart and cheerful attitude, regardless of her workload or personal circumstance, Ackerman said.

In more than two decades in her position, Walker has never missed a payroll deadline. She has braved hurricanes, floods, ice storms and other disasters to make it to the office so that our staff get paid on time. Earlier this year, she even produced payroll while at home sick with COVID-19.

Walker's dedication and hard work are always noticed, and the county was pleased to recognize her efforts with this award.

Did you know you can watch Georgetown County 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).

GEORGETOWN COUNTY LIBRARY
HAS A STORY A DAY TO
CELEBRATE THE SEASON!

Storytime Holiday Countdown!

EVERY DAY
FROM DECEMBER 14 - 25
10 AM
FACEBOOK > GEORGETOWN
COUNTY LIBRARY

News from our Veterans Affairs Officer

By David Murphy

Hello Veterans. I hope you had an enjoyable Veterans Day and, again, thank you for your service to our great nation. Let us not forget our Airmen, Soldiers, Marines and Sailors and their families while they are still deployed during this holiday season.

I would like to share the following updates with you this month:

- Beginning Jan. 1, 2021 (the end of the grace period) all direct deposit requests must be made online instead of through VA Form 24-0296 — Direct Deposit Enrollment and VA Form 24-0296a — International Direct Deposit Enrollment. If you need to update your direct deposit information, you may do so at <https://www.va.gov/change-direct-deposit>.

- Effective Jan. 1, the VA will no longer be accepting claims by fax. If you need to file a claim, you will either have to mail it, upload your claim at Ebenefits/va.gov or come to our office to have us load your claim. We are using a new system called VetPro. This system allows us to send claims electronically to the VA. It also allows us to process your claim over the phone.

I would like to remind everyone that due to the COVID-19 measurements in place, scheduling for C&P exams are taking a little longer than usual. I ask you to please bear with us. If you need to be seen at the VA hospitals, please call them first prior to going.

We'll be back next month with more information for veterans. In the meantime, if you need assistance, please contact my office at (843) 545-3330.

Be safe and have a happy Thanksgiving!



Murphy

Proud to Serve,
David Murphy, Manager,
Georgetown County Office of Veterans Affairs

Seven graduate from Firefighter course



Six volunteers and one career member of Georgetown County Fire-EMS recently completed the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Basic Firefighter course with a 100% pass rate.



This achievement is the first step in their journey to ultimately becoming fully certified firefighters. The department and the county would like to offer their congratulations to these individuals. They are: Michael Aiken, Station 16 volunteer; DaQuan Brown, Station 10 volunteer; Cedrick Geathers, Station 10 volunteer; Karsen Lange, Station 8 volunteer; Peter Lukshis, Career A-Shift; Laurie Smith, Station 16 volunteer; and Stephen Smith, Station 16 volunteer.

Tennis Lessons Pleasant Hill

December 5th

12:30 – 1:00 Tater Tots (ages 5 - 6)
1:00 – 2:00 All Stars (ages 7- 11)
2:00 – 3:00 Super Stars (ages 11 – 17)

December 12th

12:30 – 1:00 Tater Tots (ages 5 - 6)
1:00 – 2:00 All Stars (ages 7- 11)
2:00 – 3:00 Super Stars (ages 11 – 17)

December 19th

12:30 – 1:00 Tater Tots (ages 5 - 6)
1:00 – 2:00 All Stars (ages 7- 11)
2:00 – 3:00 Super Stars (ages 11 – 17)

MAKE UP DAY FOR RAIN

**Hour classes are \$10 for both
Tater tots is \$5 for both**



- Please call the Stables Tennis Center at 843-545-3450 to reserve your child's spot.
- Class session will be 2 weeks with the 19th for make-up
- Classes are limited to 8 players

Stay Connected
**WITH YOUR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT**



@GtCounty



Georgetown County, South Carolina County Government

Numbers to know

(All begin with area code 843)

Animal Control, 546-5101

Assessor, 545-3014

Auditor, 545-3021

Clerk of Court, 545-3004

County Council, 545-3058

Coroner, 546-3056

Elections, 545-3339

Finance, 545-3002

Parks & Rec., 545-3320

Planning and Zoning, 545-3116

Probate Judge, 545-3077

Register of Deeds, 545-3088

Sheriff, 546-5102

Treasurer, 545-3098

P.O. Box 421270
129 Screven Street

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



Pandemic alters but doesn't stop fall recreation programs

Georgetown County fall sports programs look a little different this year thanks to COVID-19.

For youth sports, gone are the helmets and shoulder pads of traditional tackle football, having been replaced with flags for NFL Flag Football. Cheerleaders were still on the sidelines, appropriately socially distanced. Additionally, soccer made its return to GTC Parks' program offerings after a long hiatus.

"Due to COVID-19, we had to modify what would typically have been our fall offerings, and we went with these three sports because there was minimal contact required as opposed to tackle football," said Loren Wallace, Recreation Manager for Georgetown County Parks and Recreation. "With the way this year has gone, the parents really enjoyed having something for their kids to do that minimized contact."

Wallace said that participation has been good, and that parents enjoyed the flag football league so much that the department has gotten several requests to do another league in the spring.

For adult activities, there have been several fun game nights held at the new Andrews Regional Recreation Center. So far, people have been able to play Bingo and the popular "Heads Up" game with friends in a socially distanced environment.

"We've been having about 7-10 people each night," said Fayta White, the staffer in charge of the events. "We are enforcing the six feet of social distancing rule and requiring everyone to wear masks, and even with that, it's been full of fun."



Bingo Night is a popular offering at the Andrews Regional Recreation Center.

These game nights will continue on Tuesdays from 5-7 p.m. each week. For information on what games will be offered each week, please call the Andrews Recreation Center at (843) 545-3464.

Finally, to help keep kids active over the upcoming holiday break, GTC Parks is taking a page out of the library's book and putting together physical activity kits that can be checked out and taken home. These kits will include exercise equipment such as jump ropes in the hopes that kids will keep moving in December.

"We know that there's a lot of down time around the holidays, so we wanted to do something to help kids keep in shape," said Wallace.

For information about how to check out a physical activity kit, please call (843) 545-3320.

Bike path connector completed

A long-awaited section of the Waccamaw Neck Bicycle trail was completed this month, finally providing a link between pathways along Boyle and Trace Drives.

That area of the trail is heavily utilized year-round. Without the connection, cyclists and pedestrians have had to share the road with vehicles where the trail ended — something that can be dangerous, especially during the busy summer months. Various groups, including Georgetown County, have been trying for nearly 25 years to construct a section of pathway to link the two and resolve that issue.

With the link complete, there is now 16 miles of continuous pathway from Murrells Inlet south into Pawleys Island. A short video on the project is available at [YouTube.com/gtcountysc](https://www.youtube.com/gtcountysc).

Sign up to receive a

CALL FROM SANTA

Kris Kringle will be making personal calls to good boys and girls across Georgetown County on Dec. 16 & 17. This is a free service offered by GTC Parks for children of all ages. Deadline to sign up is Dec. 13.

Register now at [GTC Parks.org/survey](https://gtcparks.org/survey)