

UPTOWN

Hometowns: The foundation of America

by Greenville Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, 2004 Municipal Association of South Carolina President

The S.C. General Assembly designated February 18 as South Carolina Hometown Day. I proudly accepted a copy of the concurrent resolution from Speaker David H. Wilkins of the S.C. House of Representatives as 500 of my fellow municipal elected officials looked on.

South Carolina is a state of 269 hometowns. Large cities and small towns, all working to provide each citizen with neighborhoods that are safe and nurturing — each working to develop the infrastructure necessary to attract economic development to its region. This can be seen in the basic

infrastructure of water and sewer systems, the security that comes from well-trained and equipped police and fire personnel, and the healthy environment that comes from our sanitation and public works departments. But beyond this basic infrastructure, our hometowns provide parks and playgrounds, encourage the protection of our built environment and drive the economic engine of our region.

One of the first questions a South Carolinian asks when striking up a conversation with a stranger is, “Where’s your hometown?” This is **HOMETOWNS continued on page 3**



Greenville Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, 2004 MASC president, accepts from Speaker David H. Wilkins of the S.C. House of Representatives a copy of the concurrent resolution recognizing February 18, 2004 as South Carolina Hometown Day during MASC’s Hometown Legislative Action Day.

Mark your calendar now to attend MASC’s Annual Meeting

- May 5** Registration brochure with hotel information mailed to municipal officials
- May 6** Registration and hotel information available at MASC’s office and on its Web site, www.masc.sc
- June 1** Palmetto Dunes housing reservation deadline
- June 14** Marriott, Hilton and Crowne Plaza housing reservation deadline
- June 24** MASC Annual Meeting registration deadline
- July 15-18** MASC’s 64th Annual Meeting at the Marriott Beach and Golf Resort, Hilton Head Island

Please note: The hotel registration form in the Annual Meeting registration brochure (which will be available on MASC’s Web site) is required to receive MASC’s group rate.

April 2004

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Hometown Legislative Action Day



United States Senator Ernest F. Hollings recognized for his distinguished service to SC municipalities

Senator Ernest F. Hollings received the Distinguished Service Award during Hometown Legislative Action Day on Wednesday, February 18 in Columbia.

While presenting the award, MASC President Lillian B. Flemming reminded municipal officials how Senator Hollings and his staff have worked for South Carolina cities and towns by helping acquire grants for water and sewer facilities, town halls and public buildings. He has generated federal support for historic preservation, road construction and hospitals and for those most needy in our society.

In recent years, Senator Hollings has fought to protect the state's manufacturing jobs, to provide funds to bring technology to court systems and to put more police on the streets. "There is not a municipality in our state that has not benefited from the public service career of Ernest F. Hollings," Flemming says.

The Municipal Association established the Distinguished Service Award to honor individuals outside municipal government who contribute to the advancement of municipal government in South Carolina. The award is not given every year, and it has been presented only 17 times since 1975.



Greenville Councilmember Lillian B. Flemming, 2004 MASC president, presents U.S. Senator Ernest F. Hollings with the Distinguished Service Award during the Hometown Legislative Action Day.

Hometowns

continued from cover

because knowing where the roots are planted tells us a lot about the tree! "Hometown" is where we learn our values, develop our potential and gain our sense of place. Our hometown quite often defines the person we become.

Maintaining quality of life, which is so appealing to our citizens, is a major responsibility of the state's 1,500 municipal elected officials. Together, with more than 17,000 hardworking, dedicated employees, we understand the importance of a sense of place that is unique in every hometown. We make the good public policy decisions that make great hometowns. Local officials are the representatives of America's hometowns.

John DeStefano, mayor of New Haven, Connecticut, and past president of the National League of Cities, expressed it this way when he spoke February 18 to South Carolina's municipal elected officials. "The fact is that throughout our nation's history, local government has been the foundation of America. For generations, what we have done and what we must continue to do in our cities and towns is to create pathways; pathways for Americans to become productive citizens, to create opportunities for working families to become solidly middle class and to make sure that families have opportunities to grow their wealth."

"It is our effort and our struggles in America's cities and towns that create these pathways. America's possibility and its economy is only the sum of all the things that we are, and all the things that we do — and too often, we sell ourselves short. You see, we are not the creatures of the country. Rather, it is we, America's cities and towns, who have made the ideal that is this nation."

Working together: The importance of the relationship between council and the municipal clerk/treasurer

by Dennis Lambries, Institute for Public Service and Policy Research, University of South Carolina

Whether called the municipal clerk or the municipal clerk/treasurer, the relationship developed with the mayor and council is perhaps one of the most important relationships that exists in municipal government in South Carolina. For many municipal governments, it is the clerk/treasurer who provides day-to-day interaction with citizens, staff, vendors and visitors. Councilmembers may come and go, but it is the municipal clerk/treasurer who helps provide the continuity needed for an effective operating government.



Classifieds

■ The Town of Bethune is seeking applicants for a part-time police officer. Send resumé to Town of Bethune, Attn: Janice Hunter, PO Box 447, Bethune, SC 29009.

■ The Town of Pendleton is seeking applicants for the position of police chief. Submit application to Teri Perry, Town Administrator, 310 Greenville Street, Pendleton, SC 29670.

■ Richland County is seeking applicants for a court administrator. Send resumé to Richland County Human Resources, 2020 Hampton Street, PO Box 192, Columbia, SC 29202.

■ The City of Goose Creek is seeking applicants for a building inspector. Send resumé to City of Goose Creek, Attn: Joellyn Robbins, HR Director, PO Drawer 1768, Goose Creek, SC 29445.

One of the greatest sources of conflict in this relationship is the lack of clearly identified roles and responsibilities — a description of what is expected of the clerk/treasurer. The mayor, council and administrator/manager should have input into the job description. This is even more important in larger municipalities where the clerk/treasurer works for the council but may report to or be evaluated by the administrator/manager. It is unfair to ask anyone, let alone the clerk/treasurer, to attempt to function without a clearly identified and agreed-upon set of expectations.

Even with a current job description, it is up to the clerk/treasurer to set the tone of the relationship with the mayor and council. The clerk/treasurer must be responsive to the needs of the mayor and council and be consistent in meeting the agreed-upon expectations. This may mean that the clerk must tactfully remind others of the limits of their authority and the importance of trust and confidentiality if these expectations are to be met. The clerk/treasurer can work with the mayor and council to make sure that the relationship between council and the clerk is clearly spelled out during the orientation provided to incoming councilmembers. Expectations should be routinely reviewed so that they accurately reflect changes required by mandates, technology and the local government's needs.

Finally, clerk/treasurers must understand that their role is that of administration — not politics. To be

effective, the clerk must function as a neutral actor in the political process. They cannot have personal political agendas or take sides in disputes or deliberations among the members of council. However, the clerk/treasurer must understand the political environment in which they must function. It is only by knowing and understanding this environment that clerks can maintain neutrality.

The road to poor relationships is often paved with good intentions. Statements by council, such as "I was just trying to help," "I just wanted to get some background information" or "I was just trying to gain some insight into what was going on," can all mean that someone is trying to get the clerk/treasurer to cross the fine line between professionalism and politics. For the council to have the open and honest communication it needs for the organization to be effective and for the clerk/treasurer to meet expectations, this line must not be crossed.

The clerk/treasurer bears much of the responsibility for working to develop these effective relationships. To be successful, the clerk/treasurer must be flexible, energetic, passionate about their job, patient, have a long-term perspective and work to maintain credibility and trustworthiness. Can you spot a local government with an appropriate, effective relationship with the town's clerk? They will be the ones who have open and honest communication, are professional in meeting their responsibilities and are addressing the needs of their citizens.

Hospitality tax: Prioritizing the possibilities

In 2003, the City of Lancaster adopted a local hospitality tax that is generating approximately \$500,000 per year. State law (S.C. Code Section 6-1-730) requires this revenue to be used for tourism-related purposes. But how does a city determine how to spend this money? How does a city choose the right projects and order of implementation that will stimulate more economic growth? How can a city ensure that the income stream generated by the hospitality tax is growing? Finally, how does a city determine the markets it should target in its hospitality-based economic development efforts?

Community Builders, a service of the Municipal Association of South Carolina, helped Lancaster address these questions through a charrette. Traditionally, charrettes have represented a process whereby design professionals converge on-site. In response to public input and first-hand observations, they create design solutions and implementation recommendations on the spot. Community Builders has used charrettes for many years across South Carolina to gain public input and offer design solutions for downtown redevelopment projects. Community Builders is now using this same process to address non-design issues.

Through the facilitated process, Community Builders provided Lancaster with:

- A downtown market analysis to understand its market opportunities and to help guide marketing and promotional activities. A few tools used to help Lancaster understand its market potential were personal interviews, zip code surveys and a retail leakage analysis. A leakage analysis determines to what extent citizens shop outside the city when local

product demands are not met. Community Builders also identified primary and secondary trade areas from which Lancaster could draw shoppers.

- A marketing campaign for the city with messages for the “internal” and “external” markets. Before the city could tell a compelling message to outsiders (external market) as to why they should visit, live and work in Lancaster, it first had to remind current residents (internal market) of the incredible assets that make the community unique.
- A recommendation for establishing an organizational entity that could have a singular focus on tourism-related efforts of the entire city, including its historic downtown core.

Lancaster also used the charrette for traditional design recommendations.

- A design recommendation for key entrance gateways that complemented and supported previous streetscape installations. These conceptual designs took the form of photographic renderings and addressed such issues as landscaping, signage and streetscaping.
- A thematic signage strategy that would be both consistent and diverse in nature. Signs used throughout the city would have a similar look and feel but would be tailored to a specific message or event. The goal was to create

Community Builders recommended a thematic signage strategy be used throughout Lancaster. These signs advertise the mill village and historic tours, yet maintain a similar theme.



an overarching theme for Lancaster, with sub-themes that reflect the nature of the areas being served (e.g., the historic downtown area, major roadways, dominant commercial corridors, etc.).

If you would like to receive a Web-based copy of the complete Lancaster charrette report or would like Community Builders' staff to make a presentation to your city or town concerning its charrette offerings, contact Randy Wilson at rwilson@masc.sc or at 803.933.1225.

Correction

The Municipal Association regrets an error in the March *Uptown* article, “Municipal borrowing: It’s not business as usual.” Please note that state law does **not** require a referendum to issue revenue bonds.

Thirty-nine graduate from Municipal Elected Officials Institute

MASC, along with the USC Institute of Public Service and Policy Research and Clemson University's Strom Thurmond Institute, recognized 39 municipal officials graduating from the S.C. Municipal Elected Officials Institute of

Government. Graduates received their certificates during MASC's Hometown Legislative Action Day in February. Institute topics address the varied concerns of local government, such as powers and duties of elected officials, finance and planning/zoning. The next

sessions, "You've Been Elected — Now What?" and "The Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina," will be held May 6 via satellite. For registration information, visit www.masc.sc or contact Nancy Brown at 803.933.1224 or at nbrown@masc.sc.



The winter 2004 graduates of the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government are, in alphabetical order, Irene Armstrong of Atlantic Beach, Wanza Bates of Fountain Inn, Audrey Bettis of Woodruff, Linda Blackmon-Brace of Lancaster, Mickey Blancett of Edisto Beach, Edward Brown of York, Greg Cole of Williamston, Obie Combs of Saluda, Sudie Cooper of Ware Shoals, Cecil Cothran of Williamston, Bertha Crawford of Abbeville, Lawrence David of Moncks Corner, Sandy Donaldson of Bennettsville, Maurice Ferree of Clemson, Leo Fishman of Kiawah Island, Kenneth Gist of Woodruff, Don Godbey of Mauldin, Timothy Goodwin of Folly Beach, Hattie Green of Belton, Lloyd Griffith of Varnville, David Harvell of Williamston, Barbara Hilton of Great Falls, Glenna Holcombe of Wellford, Curtis Inabinett of Ravenel, James Jenkins of Cayce, Archie Johnston of Edisto Beach, Jean Lee of Lake City, Betty Mack of Bamberg, Jean Martin of Belton, Joseph Martin of Surfside Beach, Harold McNeill of Abbeville, Cynthia Parks of Pamplico, Wade Pepper of Williamston, Nathaniel Shaffer of Varnville, Gloria Tisdale of Lake City, Derek Underwood of Prosperity, Gary White of Central, Terry Wilkinson of Ravenel and Anna Williams-Gleaton of Lincolnville. (Note: Not all graduates listed appear in photo.)

News Briefs



■ In March, S.C. Utility Billing Association members elected their 2004-2005 board: President — James Buchanan of Laurens CPW, Vice President — Vickie Nichols of Mullins, Secretary/Treasurer — Cathy Smith of Greenwood CPW, Past President —

Pat Cox of Greenville Water System, Members at-Large — Eric Boykin of Hartsville, Cheryl Hanna of Lake City and Darwin Reed of North Myrtle Beach.

■ Linda C. Swartz, clerk/treasurer of the Town of Salem, was awarded the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks for achieving its high educational, experience and service requirements.

■ The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) is offering two incentives in its new membership recruitment program. Municipal clerks who are not IIMC members will receive a free, one-year IIMC membership when they register for the 2004 IIMC Annual Conference in Whistler, British Columbia. IIMC is also offering a \$50 discount for renewing members if they refer a non-IIMC member to the organization. For more information, visit www.iimc.com.

Achievement Awards program recognizes local government excellence

Each year, MASC honors outstanding local government projects in South Carolina. In 2003, 17 municipalities entered the Municipal Achievement Awards program. The seven winners — Trenton, Bluffton, Cheraw, Greer, Orangeburg, Lexington and Cayce/West Columbia — were featured in previous issues of *Uptown*. Following is a description of other 2003 entries. Descriptions will continue in the May issue of *Uptown*.

Town of Johnston

Because the West Nile Virus continues to be a health threat nationwide, the Town of Johnston developed an innovative community watch program to get rid of potentially virus-carrying mosquitoes. The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control trained police officers on the proper procedures for conducting fieldwork for mosquito control. Once trained, the officers went door to door on courtesy visits to alert citizens of potential mosquito breeding grounds and to encourage them to address problem areas. The Public Works Department, which sprays for mosquitoes twice a week, began alternating chemicals to lessen the chance of making the mosquitoes immune to the chemicals. Public Works also placed briquettes containing mosquito-killing chemicals into storm drains and put chemically treated pellets in the Town's creeks and waterways. Although these chemicals are lethal to mosquitoes, they are environmentally safe and will not harm humans, wildlife, plants or pets. By working together, the Town and its citizens hope to decrease their mosquito population and protect themselves from a potentially deadly disease. **Contact: Olin Gambrell, 803.275.2488**

Town of McCormick

Concerned with the quality and capacity of the Town's electric, water and sewer systems, the Town Council and the McCormick Commission of Public Works began setting goals for upgrades. Upgrading the sewer system alone was budgeted to cost \$8 million. The cost to upgrade the electric system was projected at \$1.8 million, and upgrading the water system would cost \$2.9 million. With good planning, creative funding and strong local government relationships, the Town managed to make \$11 million of infrastructure improvements with \$8.5 million in grants, \$841,500 in loan proceeds and \$1.8 million from capital reserves. The Town now has ample electric, water and sewer capacities, operational efficiency and cost-saving operations. The Town has enhanced its future capacity and ensured its economic security.

Contact: Bernie Welborn, 864.993.4335

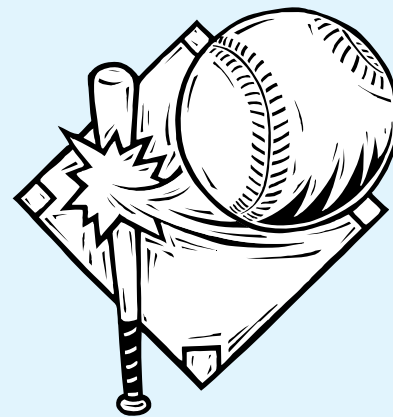
City of Mullins

Losing several major industries sent Mullins' economy into a downward spiral, leaving abandoned buildings and 15 percent fewer citizens in its wake. To encourage businesses and tenants to move back into the heart of the city, five rundown buildings were rebuilt downtown. In addition to the City's financial contribution, other funding sources for the \$2.5 million project included a Community Development Block Grant, a HOME grant, historic tax credits and a private equity loan. A high point of the revitalization effort was locating a satellite campus of Florence-Darlington Technical College in the downtown area.

In addition to infrastructure improvements, the City wanted to make the

downtown area more inviting for potential businesses and tenants. It began a separately funded streetscape project, adding brick pavers, decorative lamps and benches to the downtown area. The City hopes this is the beginning of an upward turn for Mullins.

Contact: Howard Garland, 843.464.9583



Don't be a bench warmer

Enter the 2004 Municipal Achievement Awards program and show others the exciting and innovative ways your municipality has hit a home run. MASC will recognize winning projects at its 2004 Annual Meeting in July.

Winning entries are featured in the Achievement Awards brochure, in *Uptown* and in a video shown at the Annual Meeting, during Hometown Network broadcasts and on the MASC Web site.

Entry information is available on MASC's Web site at www.masc.sc under the "Featured Links" section of the home page. Proposals must be submitted by April 9. Judging will take place May 3.



Educational Opportunities

S.C. Association of Municipal Power Systems

■ **April 14**, will hold its Legislative Event at Seawell's in Columbia.

Managers/Administrators

■ **April 16**, MASC will host a quarterly meeting of managers and administrators at Seawell's in Columbia.

Hometown Connection

■ **April 27**, municipal officials from Abbeville, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Darlington, Edgefield, Greenwood, Kershaw, Laurens, Lee, Marlboro, McCormick, Newberry, Saluda, Sumter and Union counties visit with their state legislators. Officials should meet at MASC's office at 1411 Gervais Street in Columbia at 10:30 a.m.

S.C. Business Licensing Officials Association

■ **May 5**, will hold its Spring Training and Advanced Academy at Seawell's in Columbia. Topics include "The Business Licensing Official: State Law Authorizing Duties and Responsibilities" and "Administration: Office Procedures, Applications/Forms and Computer Technology."

Hometown Network

■ **May 6**, will broadcast via satellite "You've Been Elected — Now What?" and "The Freedom of Information Act in South Carolina."

S.C. Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Institute

■ **May 12-14**, will hold its Spring Session at the Clarion Town House in Columbia. Topics include levels and forms of government, procurement and records management.

S.C. Community Development Association

■ **May 23-25**, will hold its Annual Meeting at the Myrtle Beach Marriott. Sessions include an opportunity to network with funding agencies about future projects and to hear about the City of Myrtle Beach's downtown re-development project.

For more information about these meetings or other MASC meetings not listed, please call 803.799.9574, or visit our Web site at www.masc.sc.



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