

Dorchester Leader

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By the Grace of God
AMERICAN

Proudly serving Dorchester County! Published in the Interest of Dorchester and Area Counties and Communities!

VOL. 1 NO. 1

Thursday, February 12, 2026

803-245-8010

ONE DOLLAR

Dorchester School District Four Holds Annual District Spelling Bee



Congratulations to the local spellers who competed last Tuesday night to represent Dorchester School District Four in the Spell-Bound! Regional Spelling Bee. Top honors went to 2nd Runner-Up Saige Smith of Clay Hill Elementary, 1st Runner-Up Maya Gadson of Woodland Middle, and Champion Myai Poland, a 7th grader from Woodland Middle, who will represent DD4 at the regional competition on March 10.

Thank you to the judges Ms. Stephanie Grossie, Dr. April Sanders, and Dr. Michelle Sweatman; recorder Mrs. Jill Spearman; pronouncer Mrs. Kim Chassereau; and the spelling bee team Mrs. Tricia Delice, Mrs. Latorsha Bryant, Mrs. Cate August, Mrs. Renay Haton, Mrs. Kimberly Hartzog, and Mrs. Natalie Pandora for making this event possible.

Joey Szorosy's Toy Truck Drive Benefits Children's Hospital



Support the Joey Szorosy Toy Truck Drive! Donations of NEW toys will be collected through Feb. 12 and then donated by our FCS club to the Shawn Jenkins MUSC Children's Hospital in Joey's memory. If you'd like to ship a donation to us, the address is 234 Academy Road, St. George, SC 29477. Remember, the school will be closed until Monday. After that, donations can be dropped off at the front office, or placed in the blue collection box outside the admin office. Thanks to our Fellowship of Christian Students for sponsoring this project in memory of a very special Raider, Joey Szorosy.

Local Mayors learn about updates to Opportunity Zone Law



Several local Mayors gathered at the offices of the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce this past month for the Chamber's "Meeting of the Mayors" event. (pictured above.)

Meeting of the Mayors is an event hosted several times throughout the year by the Chamber to allow local mayors from the municipalities the Chamber serves gather together to exchange ideas or attend a presentation on a topic pertinent to the local communities.

Tuesday's topic was Opportunity Zones and recent changes to the law. Opportunity Zones are a federal economic devel-

opment tool created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that encourage long-term private investment in designated low-income, distressed census tracts. The program was championed by South Carolina Senator Tim Scott. The law received some tweaks as part of the Big Beautiful Bill in 2025.

Local Mayors learn about Opportunity Zones
continued on page 2

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In the News

Free Family Fun Day is coming to Davis-Bailey Park. Saturday, February 21, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. for games, food, inflatables, archery, face painting, bubbles, balloon art, music, books, the train, and more. Activities begin at 11:00 a.m. at 5190 E. Jim Bilton Blvd. in St. George.

Send your news items to dorchesterleader@gmail.com

**FREE FAMILY FUN
DAY AT
DAVIS-BAILEY PARK!**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST 11:00 - 2:00PM

**GAMES, FOOD, INFLATABLES, ARCHERY, FACE
PAINTING, BUBBLES, BALLOON ART, MUSIC, BOOKS,
TRAIN & MORE!!**

ACTIVITIES START AT 11:00AM

5190 E. Jim Bilton BLVD, St. George, SC 29477 | dorchestercountysc.gov/pa

Dorchester County
Emergency
Management
Department Reports
Area Earthquake on
February 8th

Did you feel the earthquake? Lots of folks sure did. USGS put out a report on it. The update is below

Preliminary Report

Magnitude 2.9

Date-Time

- Universal Time (UTC): 8 Feb 2026 03:37:46
- Time near the Epicenter (1): 7 Feb 2026 22:37:46
- Time in your area (1): 7 Feb 2026 21:37:46

Location

32.943N 80.155W

Depth

5 km

Distances

- 6.0 km (3.7 mi) SSE of Centerville, South Carolina
- 6.3 km (3.9 mi) SW of Ladson, South Carolina
- 8.6 km (5.3 mi) SSE of Summerville, South Carolina
- 12.2 km (7.6 mi) WSW of Goose Creek, South Carolina
- 143.0 km (88.7 mi) SE of Columbia, South Carolina

Location Uncertainty

Horizontal: 0.3 km; Vertical 0.6 km

Parameters

Nph = 16; Dmin = 6.1 km; Rmss = 0.10 seconds; Gp = 84°

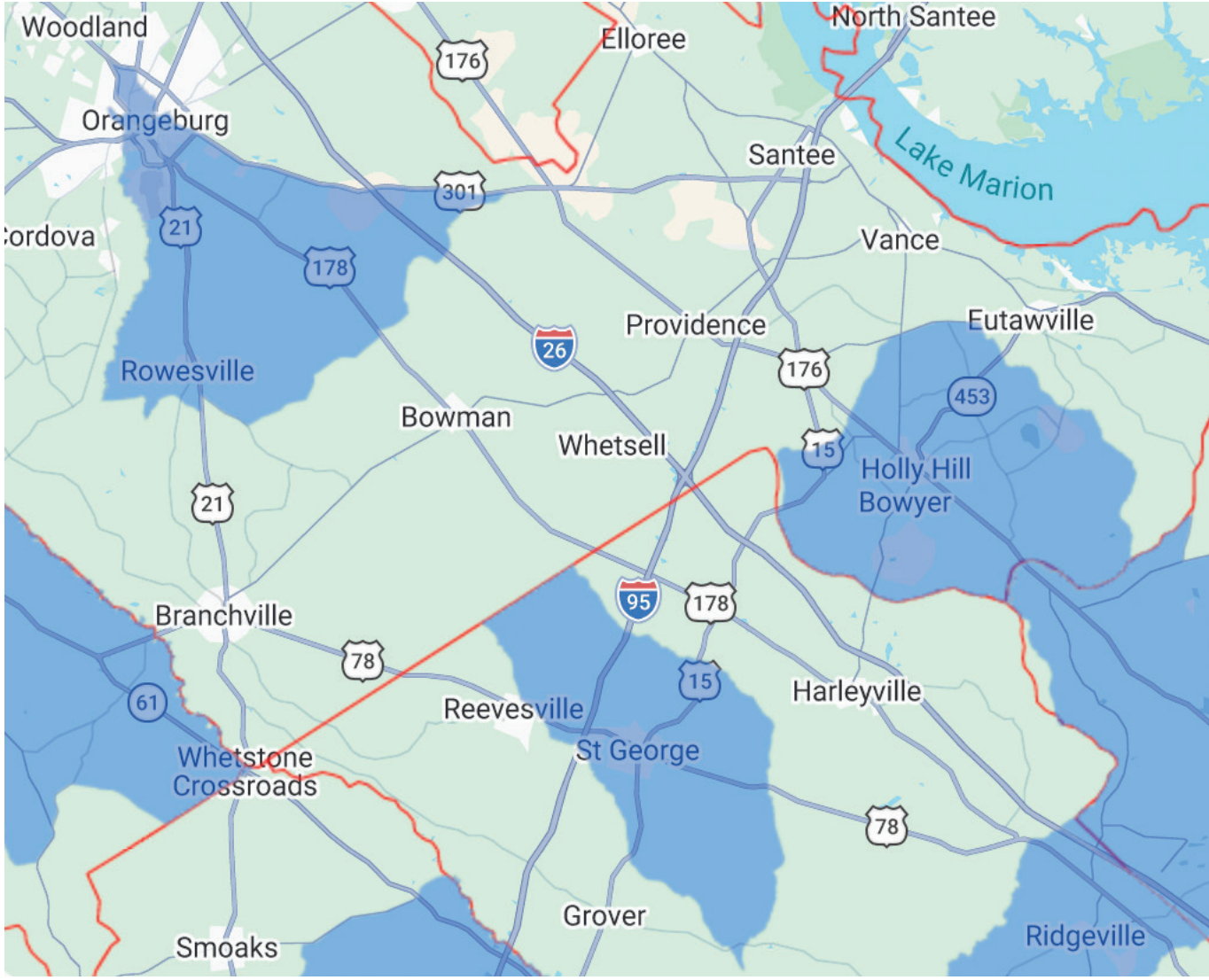
Version = 5

Event ID

se 60504953 ***This event supersedes event US6000s77p.

Local Mayors learn about
Opportunity Zones

continued from page 1



At Left- The blue areas, are census tracts currently included in the Opportunity Zone law. Several local Mayors from the region heard a presentation Tuesday about getting their communities included as opportunity zones from a local real estate broker and developer

The Zones, which were selected by each state's governor, usually with input from local partners, were designed to encourage long-term investment in projects within the roughly 8,700 zones nationwide. Those maps are undergoing revision as part of the 2025 update.

Brent Case, Broker with Coldwell Banker Commercial Atlantic, gave the attending Mayors some information on the program and showed them which lists. "There is a lot of Orangeburg County that should be in the zone that is not," said Case.

Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce
and Visitor Centers Welcomes New Member
George's Station Antiques

We're excited to welcome Jessica and Geromy Criswell, new owners of George's Station Antiques, to the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce!

George's Station Antiques features unique antiques and collectibles from a variety of vendors, with new inventory arriving weekly—so there's always something new to discover. Be sure to check out their Facebook page and website, and stop by often to find your next great treasure.

Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce
and Visitor Centers Welcomes New Member
Bosch Massage & Stretching

Please help us welcome Bosch Massage & Stretching to the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce!

Move Better. Perform Stronger. Live Pain-Free.

Located in Saint George, Bosch Massage & Stretching helps athletes and active adults overcome pain, restore mobility, and unlock effortless performance. Through evidence-based massage, Active Isolated Stretching (AIS), and sport-specific training, they focus on getting to the root of movement issues for lasting results.

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Dorchester School District Four
Recognized Three December
Everyday Heroes



At our most recent Board of Trustees meeting, Dorchester School District Four recognized three December Everyday Heroes whose work makes a daily difference for students and families.

Mrs. Margie Lewis, a dedicated school bus driver, sets the tone for each school day with care and consistency.

Mr. Michael Samson, Woodland High School history teacher and student government sponsor, invests in leadership and learning beyond the classroom.

Mrs. Latisha Brown, Woodland Middle School student concern specialist and after-school director, supports students where they need it most.

Thank you for serving DD4 with heart, purpose, and impact.

THE RURAL BLOG

As five states roll out ‘no junk food’ SNAP rules, retailers scramble to update their systems and educate SNAP users

States including SC have been granted federal SNAP waivers to restrict SNAP benefit purchases. (USDA map)

State food-choice restrictions on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program purchases have some grocery stores in a conundrum, trying to determine which foods are allowed and which aren't.

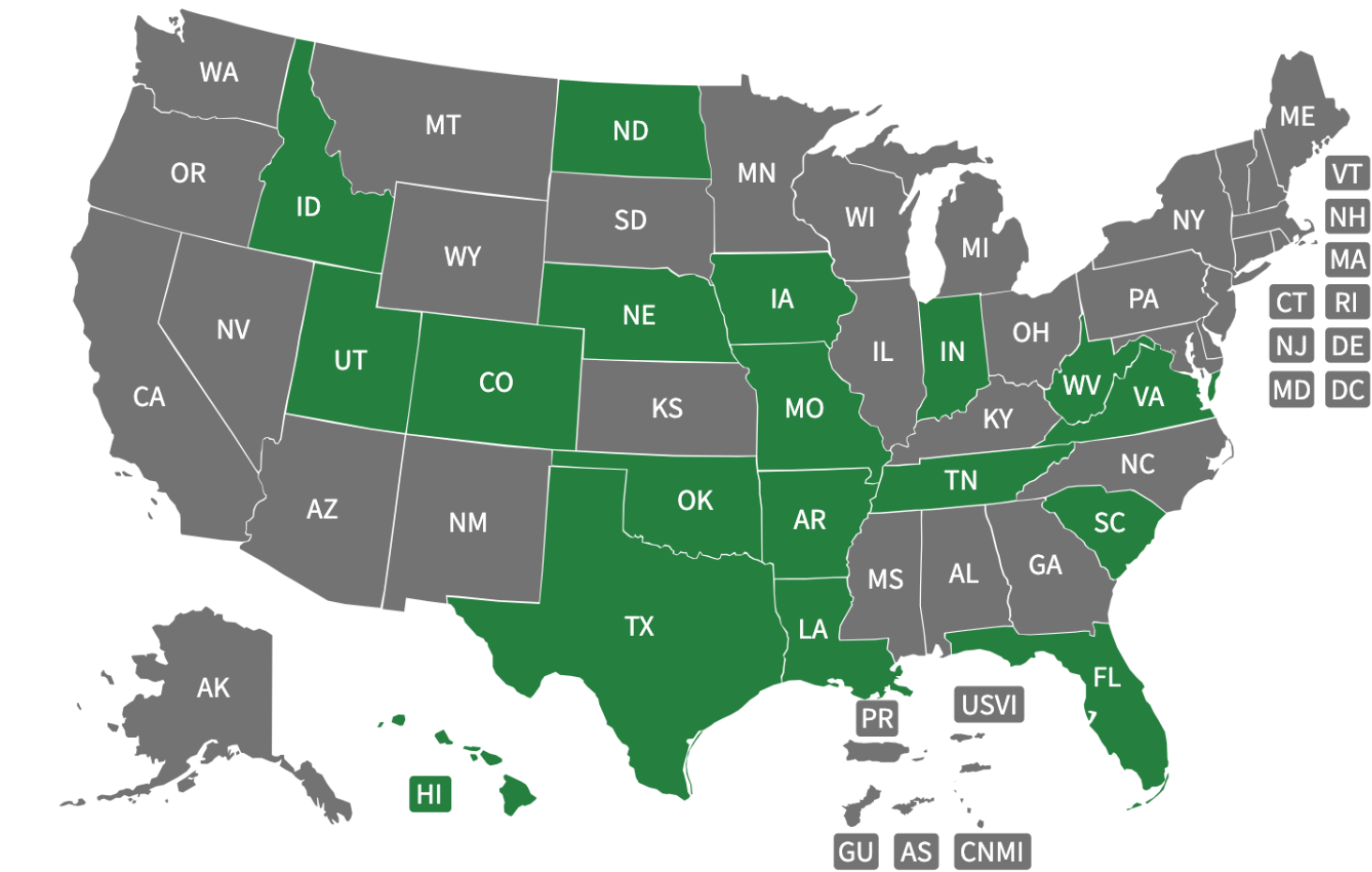
Beginning Jan. 1, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska, Utah and West Virginia rolled out their new “no junk food” SNAP purchase limits, but a total of “eighteen states have adopted new food-stamp restrictions,” report Jesse Newman and Laura Cooper of The Wall Street Journal. As a whole, rural Americans are more likely to use SNAP benefits, but less likely to know about benefit changes because of online access limits.

Each state has limited different items and has varied its wording of restrictions, which can be confusing. For instance, in Indiana, mini-donuts can be purchased with SNAP benefits, but candy bars cannot. The Journal reports, “Grocery executives said that determining which products are food-stamp eligible and which aren't has become a complex undertaking.”

Retailers, who are working to ensure that only SNAP-allowed items can be purchased, have had “employees sifting through state-issued flow charts, scanning product bar codes and checking ingredient lists across thousands of goods in stores,” Newman and Cooper explain. Allowed items have to be cataloged and entered into computer systems as well.

Beyond the labor hours needed to update their SNAP catalogs, retailers and industry groups said “guidance from USDA and many state agencies on how to implement the new restrictions has been insufficient,” Newman writes.

For states that implemented their restrictions on Jan. 1, many SNAP enrollees seem unaware of the changes. Mark Griffin, chief executive of grocery chain B&R Stores, said “his company is dealing with lines at checkout counters as clerks tell longtime customers they can no longer



use food stamps to buy soda or candy,” the Journal reports.

The SNAP changes are part of a federal push to help Americans make healthier dietary choices; however, opponents to SNAP restrictions point out that “limiting grocery options ignores the real causes of poor diets, such as low incomes, high food prices and access to healthy food,” the Journal reports. Last month, the Trump administration unveiled new dietary guidelines that it hopes can address some of the chronic diet-related diseases in Americans.

Written by Heather Close The Rural Blog

Legislators advance bill giving SC parents more control over their teens’ decisions

The bill advanced to the House floor also lets parents sue a school if their complaints aren’t resolved through a written complaint and appeal process

By: Skylar Laird

COLUMBIA — A bill giving South Carolina parents more say-so over their children’s education and medical decisions until they turn 18 advanced Tuesday to the House floor.

The bill “affirms and protects the fundamental rights of parents” by increasing the age when teens can start bypassing their supervision, Rep. Heath Sessions, who leads the panel that first voted on the proposal, said in explanation.

Existing state law sets 16 as the age when teenagers can make decisions about their health care, unless it involves a non-lifesaving surgery.

The 14-3 vote by the full House medical affairs committee included two “yes” votes from Democrats. No Republican voted against it.

“You’ve heard the phrase that it takes a village, and it really does. It does take a village,” said Sessions, a Rock Hill Republican. “But parents are in the village, right?”

The bill, dubbed the Parental Rights Act, includes a list of rights for parents and legal guardians. They range from the general rights of “directing the upbringing” and “moral or religious training” of their children to the specific ability to review “all health and medical records” and consent to “all physical and mental” health care decisions.

However, the bill sets up potential contradictions in state law on teen’s choices.

For example, it doesn’t touch the state’s compulsory attendance law, which makes parents responsible for keeping their children in school until their 17th birthday — the legal drop-out

age. And it doesn’t seek to amend the state’s abortion statute, which says 17-year-olds don’t need a parent’s or grandparent’s permission. (Abortions are banned for all ages, with limited exceptions, past the sixth week of pregnancy.)

The bill applies to “unemancipated” children under 18, which means they’re not married and a court hasn’t freed them from parental control. State law lets 16- and 17-year-olds get married with a parent’s permission.

Medical care Under the bill, doctors and other health care professionals could provide emergency care without parents’ consent if waiting puts the child at risk of death or “irreparable physical injury.” Paramedics could also help at the scene of an accident without trying to reach a parent.

Opponents testifying against the bill included a second-year medical student at the University of South Carolina.

Teens may want or need non-emergency care they don’t want to tell their parents about, Alex Fossum said. For instance, 16- and 17-year-olds may want birth control but not want to tell a parent they’re having sex, Fossum told legislators during a Jan. 20 meeting.

Existing state law allows teens under 18 to get birth control pills over the counter, but only if they already had a prescription. Emergency contraception, also known by the brand name Plan B, is available in South Carolina over the counter without a prescription for anyone 17 and older.

But Fossum said when she worked for a gynecologist, she met many teenagers

with questions about sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy who resisted testing or birth control for fear their parents would find out. The bill would ensure fewer teens seek that care, Fossum said.

“A 16-year-old can drive a car and have a job. A 17-year-old can graduate high school, go to college, enter the workforce and be persecuted as an adult,” Fossum said. “Teenagers are people, too, and they deserve a right to safety and privacy.”

But Sessions said it’s the parent’s responsibility to have those difficult conversations. He’s had those same conversations with his own 16-year-old daughter, he added.

“Don’t you think that including the parents is necessary and vital to guide that child?” Sessions said.

Not all parents have their child’s best interests at heart, Rep. Courtney Waters said Tuesday. A victim of abuse might be less likely to seek help, the North Charleston Democrat said.

Sessions noted the bill specifies that parents do not have the right to abuse or neglect a child. But Waters countered that’s so vague, it could cause a doctor to hesitate in providing care.

Education The bill directs school districts to come up with policies to ensure parents’ control over their child’s education.

If parents don’t approve of their child’s extracurricular activities, they could withdraw their child from those groups. Parents could keep their child from lessons or presentations conflicting with their beliefs “regarding sex, morality or religion.”

Schools would need to pro-



GOP Rep. Sylleste Davis of Moncks Corner, chairwoman of the House medical affairs committee, speaks with Rep. Jordan Pace, R-Goose Creek, on the House floor Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2024. Both are among committee members voting Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2026, to advance legislation on parental rights to the House floor. (File photo by Jessica Holdman/SC Daily Gazette)

vide at least five days’ notice and get parents’ permission for their child to participate in lessons geared toward “studying, exploring, or informing students about gender roles or stereotypes, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.”

Among the records made readily available to parents would be any evaluations done by the school guidance counselor.

That raised concerns for Waters, a former public school teacher. For many students, the guidance counselor is the only adult they can talk to about sensitive topics, such as questions about their gender or sexuality, she said.

“We are most likely closing up avenues for them to actu-

ally have conversations that might save their lives,” Waters said, pointing to higher rates of mental health issues and suicidal thoughts among LGBTQ youth than their peers.

State law already requires guidance counselors and other school staff to notify students’ parents when children ask to change their pronouns or say they’re a different gender.

Either way, parents want to know if their child is having those conversations so they can discuss that with their child, said Rep. Jordan Pace, another former teacher who leads the ultra-conservative Freedom Caucus.

“I think it is very important to keep this in the bill so that parents can know these con-

versations that are happening,” the Goose Creek Republican said.

The bill also sets up a complaint process for parents if they believe a school or teacher is keeping information from them.

If their written complaints aren’t resolved through local school officials or an appeal to the State Board of Education, parents can sue for \$5,000 per violation. A judge must throw out any lawsuit filed before the complaint process is fully completed. The school wouldn’t be liable if a teacher or other employee acts on their own against district policy and without their supervisor’s knowledge.

Dorchester County Sheriff's Office Swears in New Deputies



On Friday, February 6, 2026, Sheriff Sam Richardson proudly swore in six new Detention Deputies, marking the beginning of their journey of service, integrity, and commitment to Dorchester County. We are proud to welcome Detention Deputies Branham, Clayton, Dorsey, Ling, Reid, and Ward to the Dorchester County Sheriff's Office! Each of these deputies has stepped forward to serve something greater than themselves, and we are proud to have them on our team. Please help us congratulate these new Detention Deputies and join us in welcoming them as they begin serving and protecting Dorchester County.

ST. GEORGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY MEETING

Gathering Voices, Building Community

TOPICS & DISCUSSIONS

Crime Statistics | Neighborhood Police Activity Update | Home Security
Community Resources & Networking | First Aid & CPR Training

MONDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2026 AT 6:00 PM

121 SOUTH METTS STREET, ST. GEORGE

Join us to connect to the group communication app, exclusively for Community Meeting participants, monitored by SGPD officers.

www.stgeorgepolice.com

843-563-3643

ST. GEORGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

\$10,000 CASH REWARD

The St. George Police Department is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the murder of LaRoy Johnson.

Agenda	
St. George Town Council Meeting	
Klauber Building	
Facebook Live	
225 N Parler Ave	
St. George, SC 29477	
February 9, 2026	
7:00 P.M.	
1. Invocation	
2. Call Meeting to Order	
3. Pledge of Allegiance	
4. Civility Pledge	"I pledge to build a stronger and more prosperous community by advocating for civil engagement, respecting others and their viewpoints, and finding solutions for the betterment of my town."
5. Public Sign up--Agenda Items	
6. 1 st Reading Ordinance 2026-02-09 -- 100% Annexation TMS 044-00-00-007.000	- Patsy G. Knight (39AC) 6002 West Jim Bliton Blvd
7. Councilman Singletary--Appointment to Planning Commission Salena Britt-Kitt	
8. Chaunte Causey-- Crown the Lowcountry	
9. Lashiquana Edwards-- 105 Franklin St. Water bill	
10. Ned Berry-- World Grits Festival	
11. Mary Snyder Lindsay-- Pickle Ball Courts	
12. Special Event Applications-- Pam Zanowski-- Dorchester County Parks & Recreation	4th Annual Family Fun Day - February 21, 2026 - Easter Eggstravaganza - March 28, 2026 - Family Movie Night - October 3, 2026 - Truck or Treat - October 23, 2026
13. Mayor Hart's Time	- Budget Schedule - Board of Zone Appeals & 65% Accommodation Tax Board
14. Reports	- Mayor Hart -- Finance - Public Works - Councilman Hinton -- Water - Councilman Rickborn -- Maintenance - Councilman Singletary -- Court - Councilman Lindsay -- Police - Councilwoman Collins -- Properties - Councilwoman Tripp -- Office
15. Public Sign up-- Non-Agenda Items	
16. Adjournment	

Call 803-245-8010 for ads or email dorchesterleader@gmail.com

Dorchester County Emergency Medical Services Recognizes Alison Brooks as Knights of Columbus Paramedic of the Year

Paramedic Alison Brooks was recognized as the Summerville Knights of Columbus 2025 EMT of the Year. Alison has been a valuable member of Dorchester EMS Department since 2023. Although Alison will be leaving us at the end of March, her impact on our community will last for years to come. Congratulations, Paramedic Brooks.

On the morning of October 7, 2024, LaRoy Johnson, age 34, was shot on NE Railroad Avenue in St. George, SC. The St. George Police Department is pursuing leads and ask anyone with information to call (843) 563-3643.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the St. George Police Department at (843) 563-3643, or submit an anonymous tip through email at tips@stgeorgepolice.com



Opinion / Editorial

DEMOCRATS FIGHT IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT TO HAVE A FUTURE

By Bill Connor

Around a week ago, the Trump administration announced the withdrawal of 700 Federal Agents from Minnesota. This came as Immigration Czar Tom Holman went there to announce the drawdown and willingness to work with state and local political leaders. These gestures were met by heightened efforts to impede immigration enforcement. According to DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin, anti-ICE agitators claim they would block over a thousand streets in Minneapolis, and elaborated “The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is detailing cases in which anti-ICE agitators actively helped criminal illegal immigrants evade federal arrest, including suspects accused of child rape, domestic abuse and gang-related violence. The cases point to a growing pat-

tern of organized interference with federal immigration enforcement during recent ICE operations. These are the monsters that agitators and sanctuary politicians are protecting, we remind the public that obstructing law enforcement is a felony and a federal crime.” <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/child-rapists-gang-members-domestic-abusers-helped-evading-deportation-anti-ice-agitators-dhs> The Democratic Party is behind the fight against immigration enforcement and will not stop.

First, Democrats recognize they have no future if immigration laws are upheld. According to Politico, by 2030 Democrats could be in an irreversible losing political position “By combining the census bureau’s new state population estimates for 2025 with previous years’ data, experts quickly projected the number of House

seats — and Electoral College votes — states will gain or lose after the 2030 Census in the process known as reapportionment. And while those projections differ slightly, they all had bad news for Democrats: GOP-leaning states will gain electoral power and Democratic-leaning states will lose it if the trends continue.” <https://www.politico.com/news/2026/01/28/2030-electoral-college-projections-00750488> Despite reports Americans are moving from Blue States to Red States in historic numbers, Democrats can still use illegal immigration as an offset. The vast majority of illegal immigrants end up residing in Democrat Congressional Districts and “Blue” cities www.scrippsnews.com/us-news/after-crossing-border-migrants-end-up-in-blue-states-more-than-red Though illegal immigrants cannot vote

Family & Marriage

What Do You Do with Trash?

“If we open a quarrel between past and present, we shall find that we have lost the future.” – Winston Churchill

“For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” – Bible (Mathew 6:14)

Years ago, I went with a friend of mine to a trailer house he owned but rented out. The recent renter had just been evicted for failing to pay rent for several months. The evicted person didn’t seem to care; he just packed up a few belongings and left. My friend, who hadn’t been in the house for quite a while, was amazed to find it full of “stuff.” Not necessarily garbage, just a vast accumulation of useless items, years of old newspapers, mountains of old clothes, old appliances, worn out furniture, and more. More recently, I had a conversation with someone who is having problems with his wife. He’s trying to deal with issues that have caused problems in the past, but one keeps resurfacing. She keeps recalling a time when he became unreasonably angry. She wasn’t the direct cause of his anger, but received some of it, being in the house with him. He apologized for his behavior. But she hasn’t forgotten. She keeps bringing it up and holding it against him.

It’s hard to move from the past into the present and look forward to a brighter future. It’s easier to think about where we’ve been than to focus on where we’re going. But if we keep looking back, we may crash into the things in front of

us. Perhaps that’s why the Bible places great emphasis on letting go of yesterday. It’s ok to dwell on the good things in the past once in a while and perhaps seek reconciliation of some past failure, if that would be of benefit. However, it’s often best just to move forward, and not try to resurrect the past.

We have probably done or said hurtful things to others, including our family members, for which we should apologize. Then we should move forward into a better future. Now it’s up to the person to whom we’ve apologized to forgive us and also move on. The world, especially in the political arena, has great difficulty forgiving. Most of our politicians today seem to be focusing on the wrong that has been done by others, instead of forgiving, working together, and moving forward. And those who may have made a mistake have a difficult time admitting it, and seeking forgiveness, because they know that others are unlikely to forgive.

I have a very poor memory, and I often have to ask my wife about the names of people and specifics of past events. I find that those things I do remember are more negative than positive. That may just be me, but I make a conscious effort to focus on the good, both of present events, and the ones I can recall from the past.

Max Lucado, in his book “Every Day Deserves a Chance,” has suggestions for moving beyond the past. For example, we should major on the grace of God. We will mess up. We must seek forgiveness when that’s needed and then trust in God to

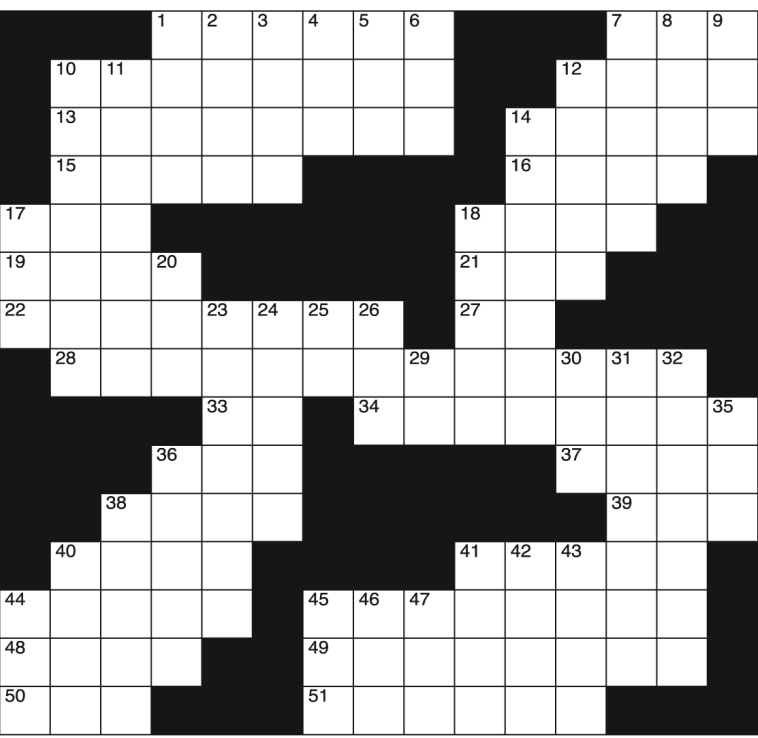


Roger Rollins, Family and Marriage Coalition

move forward. If the one we’ve offended continues to be upset, pray for them and love them. Learn to receive forgiveness, and to forgive. As the Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:1, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.” Grace can overcome a lot of offenses. In fact, Jesus says seventy times seven. But He really meant unlimited forgiveness.

A lesson I’ve learned about forgiveness is to “Always be joyful. Pray continually. Give thanks whatever happens.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) I can’t change the past. I can ask for forgiveness and forgive when that’s needed. And then I let go and move forward. “Jesus said to him, ‘No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.’” – (Luke 9:62)

Family and Marriage Coalition of Aiken, Inc. (FAMCO) was created to provide resources for you to succeed in your marriage and families. Roger Rollins, Executive Director, FAMCO, 803-640-4689, rogerrollins@gmail.com. Let us know how we can help.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Mechanical lever
- 7. Rocky peak
- 10. Leave a country
- 12. Discount
- 13. D.C. ballplayer
- 14. Partner to “oohed”
- 15. Engine sound
- 16. Japanese ornamental box
- 17. Fido is one
- 18. Amounts of time
- 19. DiFranco and Phyo are two
- 21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- 22. Make secret plans
- 27. “Tiny Bubbles” singer
- 28. “His Airness”
- 33. Morning
- 34. Perfected
- 36. Winger guitarist Beach
- 37. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 38. Self-immolation by fire ritual
- 39. A way to save money
- 40. Pulpit
- 41. Make ecstatically happy
- 44. Once more
- 45. Works on
- 48. Nocturnal S. American rodent
- 49. State again
- 50. Expression of disappointment
- 51. Type of door

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Yugoslavian communist leader
- 2. Exchange rate
- 3. High school dance
- 4. Peter’s last name
- 5. When you anticipate arriving
- 6. Israeli city __ Aviv
- 7. Goat-like mammals
- 8. Margarine
- 9. End-of-the-spectrum color
- 10. Make poisonous
- 11. Popular beverage
- 12. Actress Lathan
- 14. Where planes land and depart
- 17. Political fundraising entity
- 18. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
- 20. Buffer used in microbiology
- 23. Light, open carriage
- 24. Metrical feet
- 25. Email subject line feature
- 26. A street with lots of nightmares
- 29. Rapper Rule
- 30. River in Scotland
- 31. One who settles a dispute
- 32. Most chummy
- 35. We all have our own
- 36. Arab tribe
- 38. Slap
- 40. Ottoman military commanders
- 41. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
- 42. Emit coherent radiation
- 43. Sun or solar disk (Egyptian mythology)
- 44. Inclined to
- 45. Olfactory reference syndrome
- 46. Chest muscle (slang)
- 47. Body part



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ORANGEBURG SC 29115
P 803-937-5571

by law (note: evidence abounds that many still vote), they are still counted for apportionment purposes. This leads to more Democrat Congressional Districts than would otherwise be the case. The Biden Administration shipped millions of illegal

immigrants from red border states like Texas to blue places throughout the nation during his term. Additionally, Democrats know new immigrants vote overwhelming Democrat and that illegal immigrants would vote almost solely Democrat if given the chance. If Democrats were able to obtain amnesty, they would have a monopoly on this voting block.

The above explains seemingly irrational political positions taken by the Democrat Party dealing with elections and illegal immigrants. For example, 84% of Americans, including over 70% of Democrat voters, want voter identification (ID) nationwide <https://x.com/RepublicanStudy/status/2018470557071847543> Regardless, Democrat Party leaders fight voter ID including using the race card. Though Black Americans have made clear they find it insulting (racist?) to allege they cannot obtain ID to vote, Democratic Party leaders continue. When Chuck Schumer called Voter ID “Jim Crow 2.0”, Black Democrat commentator Steven Smith slammed Schumer over the insult <https://thehill.com/blogs/in-the-know/5725375-stephen-smith-slams-democrats-voter-id/> It hasn’t stopped the race bating on this issue.

The Biden Administration wasn’t incompetent by allowing the (likely) 20 million illegal immigrations to invade America. They also weren’t incompetent shipping illegal immigrants to key locations. This was pure Democratic Party power politics.

All this explains the insane level of “resistance” we see against enforcement of immigration law. The Democrats know they can do nothing about Trump cutting off all illegal immigration across the southern border (something they claimed was impossible). Stopping the invasion is popular with all Americans and would make the Democrat agenda too obvious. Therefore, they have put all efforts into keeping illegal immigrants in America, and particularly in the blue districts. We see rioting and attacks on ICE in blue cities, but none of this in red areas.

In causing mayhem with the resistance in blue places like Minneapolis and Los Angeles, the Democratic party receives help from two “allies”. First, are what Bolsheviks called “useful idiots”. These people help defend some of the worst illegal immigrant criminals believing they are on the side of compassion or “Suicidal empathy”. The next group is the actual communists and socialists who seek to overthrow the entire American system to end private property



SUDOKU

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				5			1	
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Level: Intermediate

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

6	7	9	5	7	8	3	4	2
8	3	4	2	1	7	6	7	5
6	1	2	7	5	6	3	4	8
7	5	3	4	2	8	1	9	6
1	6	9	3	7	5	8	5	4
4	2	8	6	1	5	7	3	2
3	4	7	6	8	2	9	5	1
2	9	1	4	5	3	6	8	7
5	8	6	1	9	8	5	2	4

ANSWER:

PUZZLE SOLUTION

			T	A	P	P	E	T				T	O	R	
	E	M	I	G	R	A	T	E			S	A	L	E	
	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L		A	A	H	E	D	
	V	R	O	O	M					I	N	R	O		
P	E	T							E	R	A	S			
A	N	I	S						T	P	A				
C	O	N	S	P	I	R	E		H	O					
	M	I	C	H	A	E	L	J	O	R	D	A	N		
				A	M			M	A	S	T	E	R	E	D
						R	E	B				E	B	A	N
			S	A	T	I						I	R	A	
	A	M	B	O						E	L	A	T	E	
A	G	A	I	N				O	P	E	R	A	T	E	S
P	A	C	A					R	E	A	S	S	E	R	T
T	S	K						S	C	R	E	E	N		

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Community Calendar

Dorchester School District 4 Employment Session Feb 12

Looking for job training, career guidance, or help paying for training? SC Works Trident will host information sessions on February 12 at Dorchester Adult Education. Walk-ins welcome at 10 AM, 1 PM, or 5 PM. Learn how to take your next step toward employment.

St. George Baptist Church

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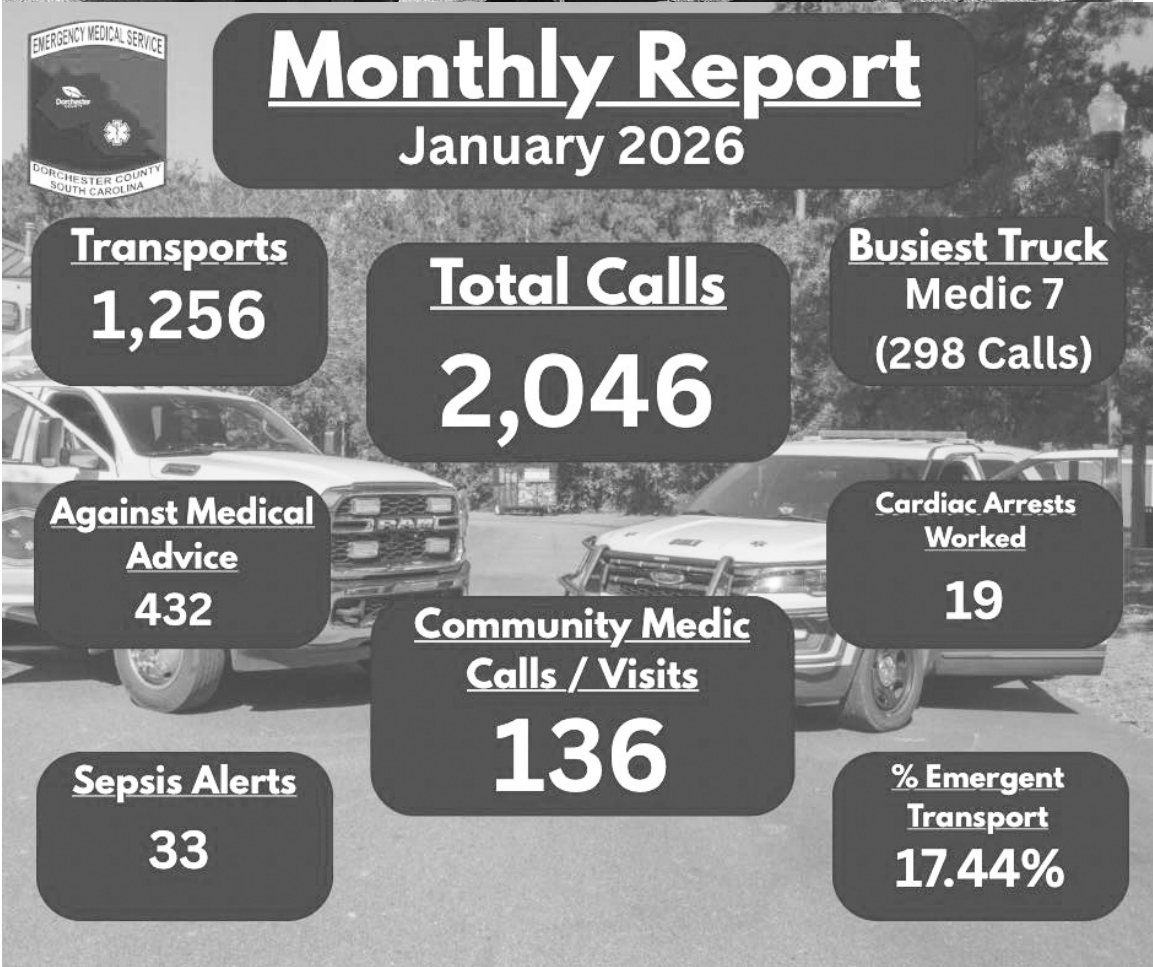
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SC Legislators denounce data center

continued from page 8

located about 15 miles away from the proposed Colleton County data center.

There's also a difference in how data centers use power.

In the summer, when the air conditioning is pumping, residential users can pull as much as 7 kilowatts of power, Frick said, but they only hit that high mark about 25% of the time. To keep the lights on, power companies have to build power plants large enough to meet that top-level demand, even though only a fraction of it is in constant use.

Industry on the other hand sits at about 80% usage and data centers can be in excess of 90%. That higher level of usage, in turn, generates high sales and more money utilities can use to pay off fixed costs, such as power lines, bucket trucks and power plants.

Data centers can benefit communities in another way — in the form of property taxes.

In Aiken County for example, Williams said the government and schools will pull in \$4.8 million annually for the next 40 years from Meta. That's equivalent to the property taxes paid by 3,100 homeowners with homes valued at \$375,000.

And the 100 jobs Meta pledged in the county — they'll pay \$130,000 a year, compared to the average manufacturing wage of \$80,000.

The resolution
Seven legislators in Colleton County's nine-member delegation signed a resolution urging Colleton County Council "to oppose the proposed data center campus on Cooks Hill Road."

They represent over 90% of the delegation's "weighted vote," according to the news release. In delegations, votes aren't equal. Legislators' votes are proportioned depending on how much of the county they represent.

"Whereas, the ACE Basin is one of the largest protected coastal ecosystems on the East Coast," the resolution begins.

"The ACE Basin Initiative was established 36 years ago to protect and preserve the rich history and diverse ecosystems of the ACE Basin through voluntary public/private partnerships," it continues. "Over its 36-year history the ACE Basin Initiative has facilitated protection of more than 350,000 acres in the Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto River Basins through collaborative processes, resulting in state and federal wildlife refuges and preserves, state wildlife management areas, and private property protected by voluntary conservations easements."

The "whereas" portion concludes with this line: "Data center developments are not appropriate in the Ace Basin Watershed."

It's signed by:

Sen. Chip Campsen, R-Isle of Palms, chairman of the Senate Fish Game and Forestry Committee

Dorchester Academy Basketball Schedule Update

❑The region game from Friday that was cancelled will now be played tomorrow (Monday February 9th) at Cathedral. This is B team boys at 4:00, followed by JV Boys, Varsity Girls, and Varsity Boys. The St. Johns game originally scheduled for Monday has been cancelled and if it's rescheduled will be just a varsity contest. This week's schedule:
Feb 9- Monday at Cathedral: B Team Boys, JV Boys, Varsity Girls, Varsity Boys
Feb 9- Monday at First Baptist: JV Girls (5:00)
Feb 10- Tuesday at Andrew Jackson: B Team Boys, JV Boys, Varsity Girls, Varsity Boys
Feb 10- Tuesday at Wilson Hall: JV Girls at Wilson Hall (5:00)
JV Girls host John Paul II on Wednesday at 4:00 before the B team games vs Colleton Prep.
Feb 11- Wednesday vs Colleton Prep: B Team Girls (5:00) and B Team Boys
Feb 12 - Thursday vs. Patrick Henry (Senior Night): JV Girls, JV Boys, Varsity Girls, Varsity Boys

Sen. Margie Bright Matthews, D-Walterboro
Sen. Matt Leber, R-Johns Island
Rep. Justin Bamberg, D-Bamberg
Rep. Robby Robbins, R-Summerville
Rep. James Teeple, R-Johns Island
Rep. Michael Rivers, D-St. Helena Island
Delegation members not signing the resolution are Senate Minority Leader Brad Hutto, D-Orangeburg; and Rep. Bill Hager, R-Hampton.

SC Daily Gazette Editor Seanna Adcox

Feb 14-Saturday Region Tournament @ Cathedral: JV Boys (11:30am) , Varsity Girls (2:30 PM), Varsity Boys (4:00 pm)
Feb 16-Monday 2/16 Region Tournament @ Cathedral: JV Girls Championship Game (4:00) and Championship games for anyone who wins on Saturday. State Tournament for Varsity Girls and Boys is begins on February 20th and February 21st (Brackets typically released on 2/18)



Proverbs 12
New International
Version

12 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge,
but whoever hates correction is stupid.

2 Good people obtain favor from the Lord,
but he condemns those who devise wicked schemes.

3 No one can be established through wickedness,
but the righteous cannot be uprooted.

4 A wife of noble character is her husband's crown,
but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones.

5 The plans of the righteous are just,
but the advice of the wicked is deceitful.

6 The words of the wicked lie in wait for blood,
but the speech of the up-right rescues them.

7 The wicked are over-thrown and are no more,
but the house of the righteous stands firm.

8 A person is praised according to their prudence,
and one with a warped mind is despised.

9 Better to be a nobody and yet have a servant
than pretend to be somebody and have no food.

10 The righteous care for the needs of their animals,
but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel.

11 Those who work their land will have abundant food,
but those who chase fantasies have no sense.

12 The wicked desire the stronghold of evildoers,
but the root of the righteous endures.

13 Evildoers are trapped by their sinful talk,
and so the innocent escape trouble.

14 From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things,
and the work of their hands brings them reward.

15 The way of fools seems right to them,
but the wise listen to advice.

16 Fools show their annoyance at once,
but the prudent overlook an insult.

17 An honest witness tells the truth,
but a false witness tells lies.

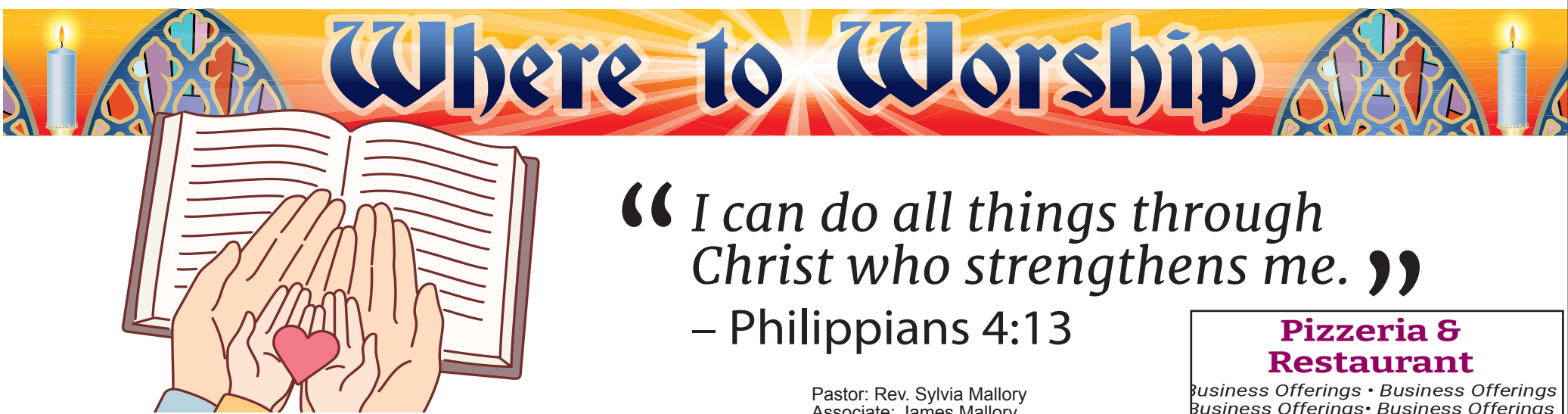
18 The words of the reckless pierce like swords,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

19 Truthful lips endure forever,
but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

20 Deceit is in the hearts of those who plot evil,
but those who promote peace have joy.

21 No harm overtakes the righteous,
but the wicked have their fill of trouble.

22 The Lord detests lying lips,
but he delights in people who are trustworthy.



“I can do all things through
Christ who strengthens me.”
– Philippians 4:13

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Bethel #2 Word Outreach Ministries 6601 Johnston Ave., Reevesville 843-563-3095 / Pastor: Rev. Rosetta Sanders
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Cathedral of Hope Ministry PO Box 754, St. George Bishop David L. Baxter, Jr.
Church of Christ Apostolic, 1184 Wire Rd., Dorchester, 563-6853
Church of Christ, 767 Hwy. 15, St. George, 563-4820
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Eagle Wings Tabernacle Of Praise, 1251 E. Main St., Hwy. 178 Dorchester... 462-2347
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First Baptist Church of Harleyville, 211 W. Main St., Harleyville, 462-7410
First Harleyville Methodist Church, Main St. Harleyville, 462-7270
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Greater Grace Outreach Ministries 128 John St., Harleyville, SC Jasper Goodwin, Pastor
Greater St. Paul AME Church, 633 Thomas Kate Road, Dorchester, 462-7713, Rev. Korteiz Chisolm
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Indian Field Methodist Church, 2030 Hwy. 15N., St. George, Pastor: Thomas Sandifer, 803-308-4646
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Mt. Pisgah Baptist Church 290 Mt. Pisgah Rd., Reevesville 843-563-4121
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Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Mt. Zion Community, 563-4045
New Grace UMC 1358 Quaker Rd., St. George, 563-6361
Pastor: Rev. Constance N. Barnes
New Hope AME Church, 950 Sugar Hill Rd., St. George, 563-5417
Pastor: Rev. Betty Walker Collins
Old St. George Baptist Church, 509 Old St. George Rd., St. George, 563-4263
Prospect Southern Methodist Church 344 Flatwoods Rd., Bowman Pastor Jim Bogstad
Reevesville Baptist Church, Rigby St., Reevesville, 563-4333
Remnant of God Ministries 171 W. Main St., Harleyville Pastors: Jamie and Christie Wheeler
Ridgeville Baptist Church 150 N. Main Street, Ridgeville, SC Pastor Rev. Thomas Cousins 843-900-1005
Ridgeville Church of God 444 School Street, Ridgeville, SC Pastor: Charles Houston - 843-821-0500
Ridgeville Church of The Nazarene 539 South Railroad Street, Ridgeville,

Pastor: Rev. Sylvia Mallory Associate: James Mallory 843-513-4844
St. Daniel UMC Two Churches Road, Harleyville Pastor: Rev. Lawrence Cantey, Jr. 462-2080
St. George Church of God, 326 Quaker Rd., St. George, Pastor: Norman Garrett 843-870-6955
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St. George Methodist Church, 120 N. Parler Ave., St. George, 563-3213
St. John United Methodist Church, 1069 Sandridge Rd., Dorchester, 563-9190
St. Mark Baptist Church, Alice Lane, Pregnall, 563-4618
St. Mark Baptist Church, Texas Community, 563-8414
St. Mark United Methodist Church, 1241 St. Mark Bowman Rd. St. George, 563-9288
St. Matthew Baptist Church, 6710 Johnston Ave., Reevesville, 563-2421
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The House of God 3598 Wire Rd., St. George, 563-3436
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23 The prudent keep their knowledge to themselves,
but a fool's heart blurts out folly.

24 Diligent hands will rule,
but laziness ends in forced labor.

25 Anxiety weighs down the heart,
but a kind word cheers it up.

26 The righteous choose their friends carefully,
but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

27 The lazy do not roast[any] game,
but the diligent feed on the riches of the hunt.

28 In the way of righteousness there is life;
along that path is immortality.

Footnotes
Proverbs 12:27 The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.



Rev. Dr.
Washington
“Wash” Webster
Belangia

Rev. Dr. Washington “Wash” Webster Belangia IV, 82, of Reevesville, SC peacefully entered eternal rest on February 5, 2026. Wash was born on April 26, 1943 in Charleston, SC to Washington Webster “Junior” Belangia III and Elizabeth “Betty” Mann Belangia.

A service of remembrance will be held 3:00 PM on Friday, February 20, at St. George Methodist Church. The family will receive friends from 2:00 PM until time of service.

Wash was predeceased by his wife, Elaine Funk



Belangia. Surviving are his two children, Dr. Webb (Shannon) of Mauldin, SC and Kelli (Sam) Shrivastava of Mason, Ohio; five grandchildren, Trey (Dana) Belangia, Grace Belangia, Caroline Belangia, Ian Shrivastava, and Miriam Elise Shrivastava; four great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild; and one sister, Brenda (Jim) Barry of Pinopolis, SC

Wash grew up in and attended school in St. Stephen, SC where his colorful

and creative life began. He was a tap dancer and was the quarterback of his high school football team. He got caught racing school buses with an unnamed cousin and played in a steel drum band. In high school, he added his own unscripted creative flair to a school play's final scene, involving a dead bird and a track starting gun; a moment so memorable it has been re-told for decades.

He was a proud 1965 graduate of The Citadel. As a young husband and father, he was called to ministry. He started his ministry in Grover, SC and eventually completed his Masters of Divinity and Doctorate of Ministry from Erskine Theological Seminary. Wash served as a pastor in The United Methodist Church for 44 years. In his retirement years, he enjoyed traveling with his wife and playing drums in a jazz band. He was compassionate and

funny and a story-teller extraordinaire.

Memorials may be made to St. Stephen Episcopal Church Restoration Fund P.O. Box 517 St. Stephen, SC 29479

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SC legislators denounce Lowcountry data center while mulling regulations for the industry

By: Jessica Holdman

COLUMBIA — Seven state legislators whose districts cover parts of Colleton County officially came out against a gigawatt data center proposed for the rural county in South Carolina's Lowcountry.

especially along the coast where residents rely heavily on underground aquifers for fresh water supply.

The Legislature could opt to task Devlin's team with evaluating data centers for water use, noise and proximity to environmentally sensitive areas.

Data center operators historically have been secretive about water usage. It took a resident su-

The bill breaks data centers into three tiers based on the amount of power they use — less than 10 megawatts, less than 50 megawatts and 51 megawatts or higher. The environmental agency has between 60 and 120 days to permit these centers, based on how large they are.

In addition to water, the agency also must take into consideration air quality. And centers must have certain buffers — a half mile from



Kayakers paddle along the Edisto River in South Carolina's ACE Basin. (Photo courtesy of SC Coastal Conservation League)

Walterboro town auditorium to voice their opposition. Their bipartisan proclamation — signed by four Republicans and three Democrats (see below) — also came on the same day senators began hearing testimony on an effort to further regulate the data center industry.

These computing centers are facing pushback nationwide, even as more are planned to power technical advancements being driven by artificial intelligence.

ing Dorchester County in 2024 to force the county to publicize water requirements for a Google data center located near rural St. George.

Davis' proposal would mandate that data centers report that information to the state annually. And it would require data center developers use the most water-efficient methods available to cool the rows of computer servers that keep the country's information superhighway humming.

national wildlife refuges and heritage preserves and a quarter mile from a critical habitat for endangered species.

Power problems
When it comes to power, that remains the domain of state utility regulators under the proposal. The Public Service Commission will have to sign off on regulated power company's arrangements with data centers, ensuring the centers alone are covering the cost of producing and transmitting the power they need.

Senators plan to take testimony on the matter from the state's two major utility companies — Duke Energy and Dominion Energy — in the coming weeks as they continue to vet the bill.

While rural electric cooperatives in the state are controlled directly by their customers rather than regulators, those companies also already have protections in place, so data centers and industry pay their fair share, John Frick, the co-operatives' senior vice president for public policy, told senators Thursday. That includes requiring companies to prepay for equipment, such as substations and power lines.

Meta, for example, paid Aiken Power Cooperative north of nine figures for equipment costs, Williams said.

Cooperatives also hold deposits on the books should the data center shutter before the costs to provide more power are paid back and set up minimums on the amount of power the centers must buy for annually, to ensure they're actually paying for all the demand they claim they'll have, Frick said.

Frick went on to say it's a widespread misconception that none of the state's rising power needs are coming from residential customers.

South Carolina's population has grown by about 85,000 new residents annually over the last four years, Frick said. Based on average usage, that comes to about 238 megawatts of additional energy needs each year, he said.

Still, the CEOs of Dominion and state-owned utility Santee Cooper told senators in September 2024 that data centers are driving 65% to 70% of their companies' future energy demand. The two are partnering on a 2,200-megawatt natural gas-fired power plant, to be

SC Legislators denounce data center

continued on page 6

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