



WACCAMAW REVIEW

A publication for residents of Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties

Staff members raise funds for Hugs for Horses

On May 9, Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments staff participated in a fundraiser for Hugs for Horses, a local therapeutic riding program for children and adults with disabilities.

As part of its regular staff meeting, WRCOG had some fun and games to raise money for this great cause. First, the staff enjoyed a pancake breakfast to kick off the event. Then there was a cake walk, fortune telling by Madame Archer, a basketball shoot-out, darts and a silent auction, all to benefit the program and those it serves.

Those who benefit from Hugs for Horses have disabilities ranging from physical and intellectual to social and behavioral. The program provides them with the opportunity to develop, im-

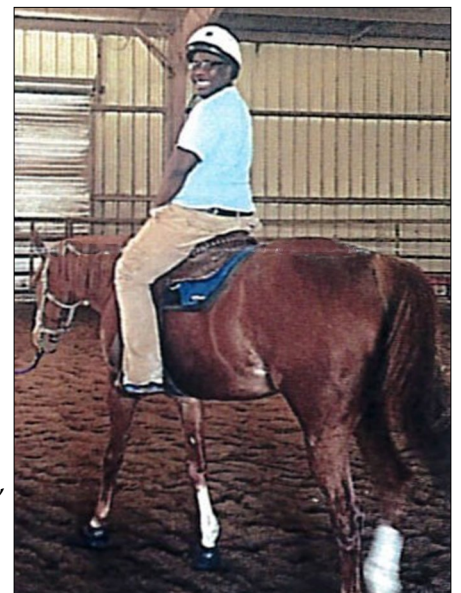
prove and have fun through horseback riding.

The COG staff set a goal of \$750. The amount donated was doubled to \$1,500, because staff gave in conjunction with Low Country Giving Day, a program that matches donations to local nonprofits.

Hugs for Horses therapeutic horseback riding organization was estab-



Waccamaw Regional's donation totaled \$1,500.



Hugs for Horses serves adults and children with disabilities.

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www.wrcog.org

Would you be a 'friendly visitor' for someone in need?

It's a sad truth that many elderly and disabled residents living in long-term nursing facilities don't get many visitors outside of staff. A new program at Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments seeks to change that.

Area residents can make a difference in the care of someone living in a nursing home or long term care facility through the "Friendly Visitor" program. Participants will work to develop a friendship

with someone who may not have family or friends nearby to spend time with and help support them.

Additionally, friendly visitors can assist in resolving minor issues with the facility in which the person they are assigned to resides, as well as help educate families

about residents' rights and provide vital encouragement with interactive contact. Volunteers with the program work

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Two graduate Leadership Georgetown

Two employees of Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments recently became graduates of the Georgetown County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Georgetown program.

The Chamber held a graduation ceremony on June 28 for Leadership Georgetown's Class 23 and Class 24. Jessie Walker, Class 23, and Kerri Kellahan, Class 24, were among the new graduates. Walker is a community development planner with Waccamaw Regional and Kellahan is a business services representative.

Leadership Georgetown is a program that identifies and develops talented and committed citizens who aspire to provide leadership in the county's business and community activities. The program develops leaders by providing quality, relevant leadership skills training to match the dynamic needs of the community.

It explains the essential roles of Georgetown's governmental, educational, economic and cultural organizations and encourages participants to form effective relationships with current, past and future leaders in the community. Finally, it also facilitates the appointment of graduates to leadership roles within the Chamber and other community organizations.



Walker, left, and Kellahan are pictured with their certificates.

Friendly Visitors

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under the South Carolina Long Term Care Ombudsman. An ombudsman protects, mediates and is an advocate to residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities. The ombudsman investigates any complaints of abuse, neglect and exploitation that occur in long-term care facilities, thereby ensuring that staff are responsive to residents' needs and concerns. Working to resolve problems and changes at the local, state and national levels, the ombudsman improves care and quality of life.

The friendly visitor provides a listening ear and companionship to seniors. A lack of social com-

munication and contact has been linked to depression and general decline. By volunteering you can improve lives, both yours and theirs.

The Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments is presently recruiting and training volunteers interested in becoming a friendly visitor. To become a volunteer you must be 18 years or older, be able to communicate with vulnerable adults, have problem-solving skills and have a genuine care for long term residents. The WRCOG's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program covers Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg counties.

For more information on the Ombudsman Program or to volunteer, visit our website, wrcog.org.

Congratulations:

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments is pleased and excited to congratulate the following individuals on their accomplishments.

First, our board member Robert "Bob" Childs was just elected the new Mayor of the Town of Surfside Beach. He previously served two years as mayor pro tempore and has served on the town's governing body for a total of six years.



Robert Childs

Waccamaw Regional is also proud to welcome aboard two new staff members. Justin Blomdahl has joined our team as aging program coordinator. He was previously employed with Georgetown County Parks and Recreation. Khaleelah Spinner has been hired as our newest career coach. We look forward to working with these outstanding individuals.



Justin Blomdahl



Khaleelah Spinner

Hugs for Horses

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lished in 1988 and relies totally on grants and donations to fund their life-changing program, with no cost to riders and their families.

For more information about the program, how to get involved, donate or otherwise participate, visit www.hugsforhorses.org.

WIOA staff hosts first youth job-readiness boot camp

Young adults from Williamsburg County who are involved in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program recently participated in a Job Readiness Boot Camp. The camp took place at the SC Works Center June 20-22. There were five participants in attendance, four of which have already been placed in work experience opportunities, staff said.

Day one kicked off with icebreakers, so the young adults could get to know each other. After that, each of the participants developed résumés and staff helped them with interviewing skills. The group then did some role playing and asked questions that employers might ask in an actual interview setting.

On the second day of boot camp, an instructor from Williamsburg Technical College facilitated a customer service training. Each student was able to gain a certificate after completion, which they could add as an achievement on their résumés.

Wednesday was spent outdoors engaging in problem solving activities. The group worked together on a project to reach a common goal. Frustrations were obvious, leaders emerged, perseverance was challenged, teamwork was achieved and problems were solved! This activity gave the young adults much needed skills for the workplace.

Boot camps like this one will be held in every county in the region for young adults.



Lavonne Briggs, Zaire Washington and Deandre Chandler are pictured on the last day of boot camp.



From left are Lavonne Briggs, Zaire Washington and Deandre Chandler.



Boot camp participants work on a project.

Kingstree's new mayor joins Waccamaw Regional board

The Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments Board of Directors has a new member. Darren Tisdale, mayor of Kingstree recently joined the board.

Tisdale was elected as mayor on Jan. 4. He served as a council member representing District 3 before winning the town-wide election for mayor.

A Kingstree native, Tisdale's family ran the Red and White grocery store for many years. Tisdale graduated from Kingstree Senior High in 1985. He



Darren Tisdale

worked with Santee Electric for nearly 20 years. He then bought and ran Tisdale's produce, better known as "the fruit stand."

Tisdale currently owns and operates Williamsburg Lawn Care. He and his wife, Pam McKenzie Tisdale have 3 children. Their son Bryant and his wife live in Oklahoma City. Cole is a Marine and lives with his wife and child in Jacksonville, NC. Daughter DeAnna is newly married.

The Tisdale family is very involved in international missions. They have visited Serbia and Romania where they served in local churches and ministered directly to the leadership in each church.

Stubbs is dedicated to assisting those in need

Sometimes unexpected opportunities arise while an injured worker participates in ReEmployAbility's Transition2Work program.

After a work-related injury, Jeramie Stubbs' employer placed him through the program to modified duty at a nonprofit agency while he healed. He ended up working with Waccamaw Regional's Assisted Rides program.

The Assisted Rides Program works to fill the transportation gap faced by disabled individuals 21 and older, and senior individuals 60 and up. This program helps to enhance the quality of life by providing non-emergency rides to doctor's offices, grocery stores, pharmacies, human service agencies, social activities and more.

While volunteering at the Assisted Rides Program, Stubbs has assisted with volunteer paperwork, helped to train volunteers on safety and helped to recruit new volunteers.

Volunteering has given Stubbs the chance to improve the lives of others, and also benefited him personally.

"It has really helped me with my communication skills; speaking out in public to large groups, I've overcome



Jeramie Stubbs

my shyness," said Stubbs, an HVAC helper by trade. "I enjoy teaching people about the (Assisted Rides) program, and people appreciate what I am saying."

Added to his enjoyment of being part of the program, Stubbs respects what the nonprofit organization is doing for the local community. Being involved in ReEmployAbility's Transition2Work program has been a val-

uable hands-on learning experience. After the flood that devastated many areas in South Carolina, the Assisted Rides Program staff attended an event to help those in need of assistance. The S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley came to assist and thank everyone for their efforts in helping the community recover. She stopped by the Assisted Rides program's table and personally thanked Stubbs for all he has done to help people after the flood.

Trina Cason, the Assisted Rides mobility manager, also appreciates everything Stubbs has done to help the program.

"He has promoted it in the community, getting more volunteers and been a great ambassador for the program, doing presentations about the program in the community. It's a tremendous help having him come in every day," Cason said.

The Assisted Rides program would not exist without the hard work of dedicated volunteers like Stubbs. Through Transition2Work, Stubbs has had a positive experience, improving his skills, and been able to make an impact in his community while volunteering for Assisted Rides.

Johnson proves benefits of Work Experience program

Oneal Johnson came to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program in 2015 hoping to learn more about career options in the Georgetown area. After working closely with his career coach in the Georgetown SC Works Center, he decided that he was ready to go straight into a work environment where he could learn valuable job skills while earning wages.

Johnson enjoys working with his hands in a team environment, so when a potential work experience opportunity came about with Georgetown County Water and Sewer District, he seemed like a natural fit. The Work Experience program allows a youth participant who is searching for career options to earn wages funded directly by WIOA while they train hands-on.

Johnson started working with the district in March. His job duties included maintenance painting for water meters. Gaining valuable experience and knowledge in this

field, he worked full-time for two months before a permanent position opened in another department. After he was made aware of this new opening, Johnson quickly applied for this position as a water meter technician and was hired for this full-time permanent job on April 27.

Through his hard work with the district, Johnson was able to prove himself as an excellent candidate. WIOA was able to roll the Work Experience contract over into an on-the-job training contract; thus allowing the company to be reimbursed for up to 75 percent of a new hire's wages for a maximum of 400 hours.

The hands-on knowledge and skills Johnson gained from his Work Experience with the district gave him the tools he needed to become successful in his new job. He was able to begin his career not only with the help of the WIOA program, but through his own hard work and dedication.