



# WACCAMAW REVIEW

A publication for residents of Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg counties

## Medicare open enrollment for 2016 is here

*Workshop series in Myrtle Beach will answer questions, help participants make plan choices*

Open Enrollment for Medicare arrived on Oct. 15, but for many people, the options can be difficult to navigate alone.

With more than 24 drug plans offered in this region in South Carolina, an annual review should be an essential part of financial planning for all Medicare beneficiaries. Medicare drug plans can make changes every year, including costs, coverage, and what pharmacies are in network.

To help beneficiaries find a drug plan tailored to their specific needs the State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) will hold Medicare Open Enrollment Workshops in October, November and December. These workshops will take place at the Socastee Library, 141 707-Connector Rd., Myrtle Beach S.C. 29588.

The first workshops took place Oct. 22 and 29. Additional workshops are scheduled for Nov. 5, Nov. 19, and Dec. 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

# MEDICARE

*Open  
enrollment  
ends Dec. 7*



The last day for open enrollment is Dec. 7, 2015.

The workshops are free, but due to limited space, registration is required. To register for one of these workshops, contact Kayla Ives with Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments at (843) 436-6252 or [kives@wrcog.org](mailto:kives@wrcog.org).

If you cannot attend a workshop, call (843) 545-8502 and schedule an appointment by phone or in person at our main office, 1230 Highmarket St., Georgetown.

### Inside this issue:

- Meet our new Board Members, staff. See Page 2
- Waccamaw Regional introduces a brand new service. See Page 2
- Success Spotlight. See Page 3.
- Caring for caregivers. See Page 4.

[www.wrcog.org](http://www.wrcog.org)

## Waccamaw Regional brings home national honors

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments was recently presented with multiple awards from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for programs in 2015.

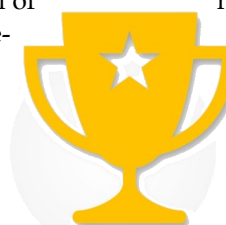
Award-winning Waccamaw Regional programs include the Murrells Inlet Watershed Plan and the Grand Strand Routing and Wayfinding Plan.

These plans were two of 115 projects from 32 states that were honored for

having significant impacts in their regions. Both Waccamaw Regional projects show creative approaches to regional challenges that, once met, strengthen local and regional development nationwide.

For more information about these projects, contact Dan

Newquist for the Watershed Project at [dnewquist@wrcog.org](mailto:dnewquist@wrcog.org), and for the Grand Strand Routing and Wayfinding Plan, please contact Sarah Smith, [ssmith@wrcog.org](mailto:ssmith@wrcog.org).



**AWARDS**

## Waccamaw Regional welcomes new board member, staff

Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments is pleased to announce that Georgetown County Clerk of Court Alma White is the newest member of the agency's board of directors.

White brings a wealth of knowledge from her background working in the Georgetown County School District, serving as a member of Georgetown City Council and Mayor Pro Tem, as well as her years of experience in her current position as Georgetown County Clerk of Court.

Additionally, Waccamaw Regional welcomes new staff members, including: Adam Ronan, planner; Fred Smith, workforce community development specialist; and Kim McCutchen, business service representative.



**Alma White**

## Thank you, United Way!



Thank you to Black River United Way for hosting the recent volunteer fair, which resulted in four new volunteers for our Assisted Rides program. To top that off, the Black River United Way Day of Caring resulted in one more volunteer and several new riders. Above: Tonya Mitchell, LTC Ombudsman assistant, and Jeramie Stubbs, Assisted Rides volunteer are pictured at the volunteer fair Sept. 9. At right: Donald Armistead is a new volunteer following the Day of Caring.



**LIVE UNITED**

## Waccamaw Regional planner serves as temporary Loris administrator

Earlier this year, Waccamaw Regional was presented with an opportunity to provide municipal consultant services for the City of Loris and decided to accept the challenge.

The City has been involved in a search for a permanent full-time administrator. However, the City recognized that a short-term need for a temporary administrator existed. Waccamaw Regional was ultimately selected to provide assistance in this capacity.

As part of Waccamaw Regional Council of Governments' assistance to Loris, a staff member was selected to serve as temporary administrator for the City, while the search for a permanent administrator continued.

Michael Dobson, a Planner with Waccamaw Regional, will serve in this capacity.

Dobson studied public administration at Clemson University and the University of South Florida, earning a Master of Public Administration degree from USF. The MPA degree is considered to be the terminal degree for a city management career.

The addition of this service, in addition to other technical assistance options, further enhances Waccamaw Regional's ability to assist its member jurisdictions. Waccamaw Regional offers services including assistance with comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, planning studies, hazard mitigation plans, grant writing and administration, and development regulations.

"This program has been a long-term goal for services of



*Michael Dobson is the new interim administrator for the City of Loris.*

"This program has been a long-term goal for services of the COG.

We're thrilled to see it come to fruition in the Waccamaw Region."

— Sarah Smith,  
Executive Director

the COG," said Sarah Smith, Waccamaw Regional's executive director.

Smith once served as temporary administrator for the Town of Cowpens, S.C., when she worked for the Appalachian Council of Governments and is thrilled to see the addition of this service come to fruition in the Waccamaw Region. Any municipality in the Waccamaw Region that would like to inquire about municipal consultant services should contact Tom Britton, planning director, at (843) 546-8502 or [tbritton@wrcog.org](mailto:tbritton@wrcog.org).





### SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT:

## Meet Latika Dickerson, Boeing employee

After experiencing a layoff from a local machine shop, Latika Dickerson came straight to the Georgetown SC Works Center, where she learned more about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program.

She had been considering finishing up her credit hours to complete her Associate's Degree of Science at Horry-Georgetown Technical College, and after learning that WIOA could assist her with this, she immediately attended an orientation to see if she would be deemed eligible to enroll in the program. After she was enrolled, she was able to pursue her goal of finishing her degree.

"The WIOA program was able to fill the gaps I needed to be successful," Dickerson said. "I received assistance with childcare, textbooks and tuition."

Through WIOA, Dickerson was able to receive the support she needed in order to complete her Associate's Degree. She completed her degree in just under two years, and after graduating found herself again looking for a full-time job. She applied for an assembler position at Boeing, and was hired as an Assembler a few short months later.

"Having my Associate's Degree in science prepared me for the analytical aspects of my career at Boeing," Dickerson said. "I started working as an assembler with Boeing, and I have been with Boeing for five years. I now work as a mechanic for special projects, and having my Associate's Degree really prepared me for my career."

Dickerson is also a part of "Boeing Bureau" — a group of three speakers who go out to schools and



career fairs in the area to emphasize the importance of education in the science and math fields for today's job market.

Dickerson offers this advice to those considering participating in the WIOA program: "Being involved in the WIOA program is one of the best decisions you will make to further your career. The WIOA program offers many resources you may not know are available to you. Take advantage of these resources, and I am glad to tell my story about the WIOA program to inspire someone else."

## Pelicans Night: Summer is over, but fun memories remain



Waccamaw Regional staff and their families enjoyed a night out under the stars for a Pelicans baseball game recently. Summer may be over, but the happy memories bring smiles to our faces. At right are Hayes Smith, son of Sarah Smith, holding Kai Dobbins, son of Ashley Dobbins. Above are Kelly Stuckey and family. Kelly is assistant Finance director for Waccamaw Regional.

## Celebrating our caregivers in National Family Caregiver Month

November is National Family Caregiver Month and it's only fitting that we recognize and celebrate a significant segment of our population who are invaluable to so many.

Statistics show that two out of five adults across the nation provide 20 hours or more per week of unpaid care to a child or adult diagnosed with one or more disabling conditions. The majority of these caregivers are women in their late 40s who have been caring for someone (most likely their mother) for at least four years, and who often are also employed outside of the home. Today we find that men also comprise a considerable portion of caregivers across our country.

It is noteworthy that many of those who care for others do not self-identify as a "caregiver," which can create a barrier to seeking much needed support from others. The help these caregivers provide ranges from offering transportation and/or shopping assistance, to helping with hands-on care in the form of bathing or some other personal care need.

Juggling care giving, family, and work can be overwhelming and isolating. Many caregivers find themselves in this role out of necessity rather than by choice, making the tasks they face seem even more daunting. Due to the physical, emotional and financial toll the responsibility of caring for another can exact on caregivers, they are at significant risk of becoming ill themselves if adequate support is not sought and provided.

Following are some ideas for assistance, support and thanks that can be provided to caregivers to let them know they are appreciated and valued:



for the Caregiver

- Offer to stay with a caregiver's loved one so they can spend time doing something they enjoy, such as visiting with friends or family, going to a movie, attending a church service, or relaxing on the beach.

- Bake a casserole or pie, or offer to make a complete dinner (especially nice when it is a holiday dinner) for the caregiver and family.

- Ask if the caregiver needs anything from the grocery or drug store.

- Present the caregiver with a gift certificate to use at a local spa, or tickets to a movie or local comedy club.

- Help a caregiver with holiday preparations, such as decorating their home or getting holiday cards out.

- Email or send card of thanks, or a bouquet of their favorite flowers.

- Do some yard work or help with some other task a caregiver may need done around their home.

- Offer to attend a support group or educational workshop with a caregiver.

- Provide transportation for a caregiver to a doctor's appointment or stay with their loved one so they can attend a medical appointment.

- Help a caregiver get in touch with formal and informal supports who can meet their needs.

Remember that even the smallest act of kindness can make the world of difference to a caregiver. With just a little time and effort you can make a caregiver's day less stressful and help ensure their care giving is a more joyous experience.

## Sometimes a staff meltdown can be a good thing...

Have you had a meltdown yet? Well hang on! In September, Waccamaw Regional started a Staff Melt Down Challenge — a weight loss challenge to support and encourage coworkers to shed pounds before the holidays. The challenge lasts 12 weeks and participants track changes in their weight from week to week.

Each week, there is a new challenge to promote healthy eating, exercise and to encourage staff members.

If an employee has gained weight at the weekly weigh-in, the employee must pay \$1 for each pound gained. If an employee maintains

weight or loses weight at the weekly weigh-in the employee does not have to contribute any money.



The staff member who "melts down" the most after the 12 weeks will receive a Fitbit.

Not only is Waccamaw Regional encouraging participation from staff, but the agency is competing against five other Councils of Governments in

South Carolina who have taken up this challenge.

Stay tuned to see which employee melts down the most and if Waccamaw Regional has the biggest meltdown in the state!