

Tree Country

November 20, 2014



the employee
newsletter of the
**South Carolina
Forestry Commission**

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from the desk of
STATE FORESTER
Gene Kodama



November has been a very busy and productive month for the Forestry Commission. In just the first week, we sponsored a SC Tree Farm tour, held a Commissioners' meeting (both at our Niederhof Forestry Center in Jasper County) and participated in the SC Forestry Association's annual meeting. All three events were outstanding.

Many employees worked diligently for months to prepare for these events at Niederhof, and the property has never looked better. The buildings and grounds were upgraded, and the tour route was improved greatly, thanks in no small part to a new friend of the Commission via the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) and our hunt auctions, Ricky Price (whom you'll read more about in the next issue).

Tour attendees were very impressed with the Center and its contribution to genetic improvement, forest landowner

support, forest productivity and the jobs that result from improved timber production. Our appreciation goes out to our team and partners who prepared for these events and helped with their execution.

After the Tree Farm tour and Commissioner meeting, several Commission employees participated in the SCFA annual meeting as attendees, exhibitors, Tree Farm Silent Auction workers and presenters. I was honored and privileged to present our annual update on the state of South

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Carolina's forest lands, industry and economic impact. Other speakers included CEOs, presidents, advocates and leaders in the allied fields of forestry, logging, forest products and transportation, all of whom provided valuable insight on business strategy, issues, challenges and opportunities.

The SCFA staff, officers, exhibitors and members did a fantastic job preparing for the meeting, which had well over 400 registered attendees. SCFA continues to be a strong voice and effective advocate for our forestry community, and we are fortunate to enjoy such a strong partnership with them.

You will also read in this bulletin about a Veterans Day deer hunt that the Commission and the QDMA hosted at Niederhof to honor and thank some of our South Carolina National Guard personnel for their service.

With the help of QDMA, we had a very successful event and delivered a \$1000 check to a local SCNG Family Readiness Group to support the families of deployed active duty soldiers.

Before our next issue of *Tree Country*, another Thanksgiving will have come and gone. I hope you all have a happy holiday as we pause to remember and express thanks for our many blessings.

Best regards,
Gene



Outgoing SCFA Chairman Joey Ferguson, right, greets State Forester Gene Kodama after his Thursday presentation about the state of South Carolina's forests.

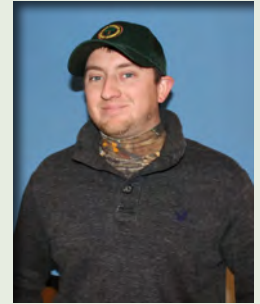
A hearty greeting to our newest team members



Daniel Beach
Forestry Technician I
Coastal Region



David Camp
Forestry Technician I
Piedmont Region



Evan Sullivan
Forestry Technician II
Manchester State Forest



Kevin Douglas
Trades Specialist II
Harbison State Forest



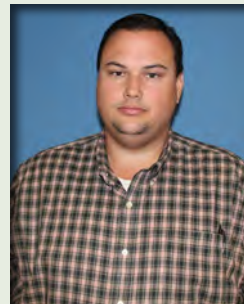
Kody McNeil
Forestry Technician I
Pee Dee Region



Dale Curry
Forestry Technician I
Piedmont Region



Weston McCathern
Forestry Technician I
Pee Dee Region



Mike Walley
Forestry Technician I
Piedmont Region

Welcome to the Forestry Commission, guys!

We want YOU... to help us improve our website

Over the next year, the Dept. of Communications and Public Information will be redesigning the Forestry Commission website. We know it needs improvement, but we can't do it without your input. E-mail Doug Wood with your comments (negative and positive), suggestions and any other feedback we can use to make it the best agency website in the state!



Tree Farm tour showcases SCFC's Niederhof Forestry Center

Niederhof Forestry Center played host to the South Carolina Tree Farm Forest Owners Tour Wednesday, Nov. 5, giving more than 70 attendees an up-close look at the operations of the Commission's forest and seed orchard in Jasper County. Niederhof is a 1,593-acre tract of land purchased by the SCFC in 1983 to establish second-generation seed orchards and provide areas for future advanced-generation orchards. Located in an area of the state well known for good seed production and minimal frost/ice damage, it has also been used as a demonstration forest for test plantings.

The event featured several different tour stops around the property, each highlighting different species of trees, their site preparation, planting methods and growth characteristics. Attendees also viewed the second- and third-generation seed orchards before touring Niederhof's seed processing facilities.

Tree Farm attendees walk among two demonstration plantings.



SCFC Edisto Unit Forester Pete Stuckey describes the establishment of a FlexStand demonstration planting.



SCFC Resource Development Director Tim Adams, right, looks on as Steve McKeand, director of the NC State Tree Improvement Cooperative, demonstrates how to graft a loblolly scion onto root stock.

SCFA holds annual meeting in Hilton Head

State Forester Gene Kodama, who also served as SCFA president in 2002, presented the Forestry Commission's annual update for attendees Thursday, Nov. 6.



The South Carolina Forestry Association opened its three-day annual meeting Nov. 5 in two locations: the Westin Resort on Hilton Head and the Niederhof Forestry Center in Jasper County.

Attendees who chose golf and sporting clays at the hotel no doubt had a good time, but they really missed out on the educational opportunity provided by the SC Tree Farm field tour hosted by the Forestry Commission (see page 3).

Outgoing SCFA Chairman Joey Ferguson opened the proceedings Thursday morning, followed by a highly engaging keynote address by Plum Creek Timber Company CEO Rick Holley. Other notable

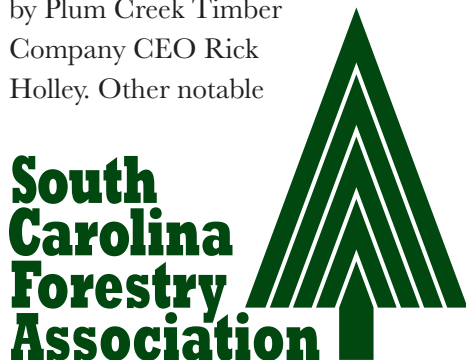
speakers included State Forester Gene Kodama; SCFC Commissioners Skeet Burris and Sam Coker; Log Creek Timber owner Reg Williams, Jr.; White Oak Forest Management President Amy McFadden; SC Trucking Association President Rick Todd; Canfor President Doug Warstler; and Sustainable Forestry Initiative President Kathy Abusow.



Former SCFA Chairman Amy McFadden, left, surprises SCFA Communications Director Frances Taylor with a plaque thanking and honoring her for her 30 years of outstanding service to the association.



One of the highlights of SCFA's annual meeting is the award ceremony on the final day. This year's SCFA award winners are, from left to right, T. Furman Brodie, recipient of the Charles H. Flory Distinguished Service Award; Danny McKittrick, recipient of the Logger of the Year Award; Victoria S. Pasco, recipient of the Jerry L. Shrum Outstanding Educator of the Year Award; and Jimmy Sanders, recipient of the South Carolina Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year Award.



On the Hunt



Having recently returned from deployment with the 132nd MP unit from West Columbia, Cameron Kenner of Lexington proudly displays his two kills.

SCFC celebrates Veterans Day with 3-day military appreciation hunt

There's no better way to celebrate Veterans Day than with those who serve (or have served) our country in the armed forces. That's exactly what the Forestry Commission did Nov. 10-12 at its Niederhof Forestry Center in Tillman, hosting the sixth annual Military Appreciation Deer Hunt in partnership with the Quality Deer Management Association.

Five active-duty soldiers from the South Carolina National Guard attended along with the winners of three QDMA-auctioned hunts. QDMA Mid-Carolina Branch member Ricky Price purchased all three hunts from the auctions and brought five of his employees to experience Niederhof. QDMA branches from around the state

provided delicious meals, hats and caps for the hunters and corn for the stands.

DeLoach Meat Company in Hampton donated all the processing for all the deer from the hunt. Owner Steve DeLoach said he was happy to contribute because the Lord has blessed his family, and he wanted to pass the blessing on to theirs (the military families).

During the four hunts over two-and-a-half days, 170 deer were observed, and 12 were harvested for wildlife management.

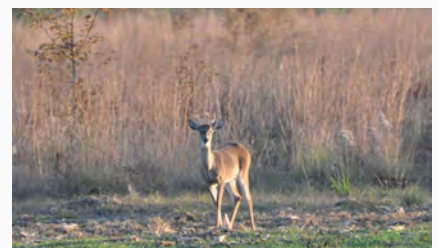
One of the hunters, Cameron Kenner of Lexington, harvested a big 6-point buck on the last morning, his second. He stated, "This is a hunt of a lifetime. I saw the most deer I have ever seen on a hunt."



State Forester Gene Kodama, QDMA Regional Director Rick Counts and Pete Stuckey presented a check for \$1,000 to Sam Gaither of the 351st SCNG Unit of Sumter, who represented the Family Readiness Group (FRG) that is about to be deployed again. The money comes from a portion of the auction bid and is designated for FRG groups.



Following a safety briefing, Ricky Price and the others sighted their rifles on the range before drawing stands and heading out to hunt.



Participants observed this young buck on the first day, one of 170 seen over the course of the hunt.



Active-duty military members and auction benefactors participated in the hunt hosted by SCFC and QDMA.

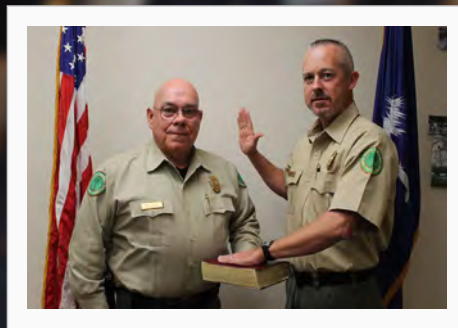
Comings & Goings

Stephen Patterson graduates from SCCJA

Stephen Patterson graduated from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy Friday, Oct. 31 in preparation for his new role as Fire Supervisor for Saluda, Edgefield and McCormick Counties.

Starting as an FIA technician, and later serving as a project forester, the nine-year SCFC veteran says he's looking forward to his new responsibilities.

He was sworn in Monday, Nov. 17.



It's party time... David West's retiring!

As many of you already know, Law Enforcement Chief David West is set to retire this December after 31 years with the Forestry Commission, nine of them as chief.

Throughout his career, starting as a bulldozer operator and later as a ranger, David's done a lot of different things at SCFC. He's leaving to become the Kershaw County Coroner, beginning this January.

The Commission is hosting a retirement party for David at the Environmental Education Center in Harbison State Forest Monday, Dec. 1 from 12-2 p.m.

The meal will be catered by Hudson's BBQ at a cost of \$13 per person. Please RSVP to Judy Lucas by Friday, Nov. 21 at (803) 896-8851 or jlucas@sfc.gov. Make checks to Judy Lucas.

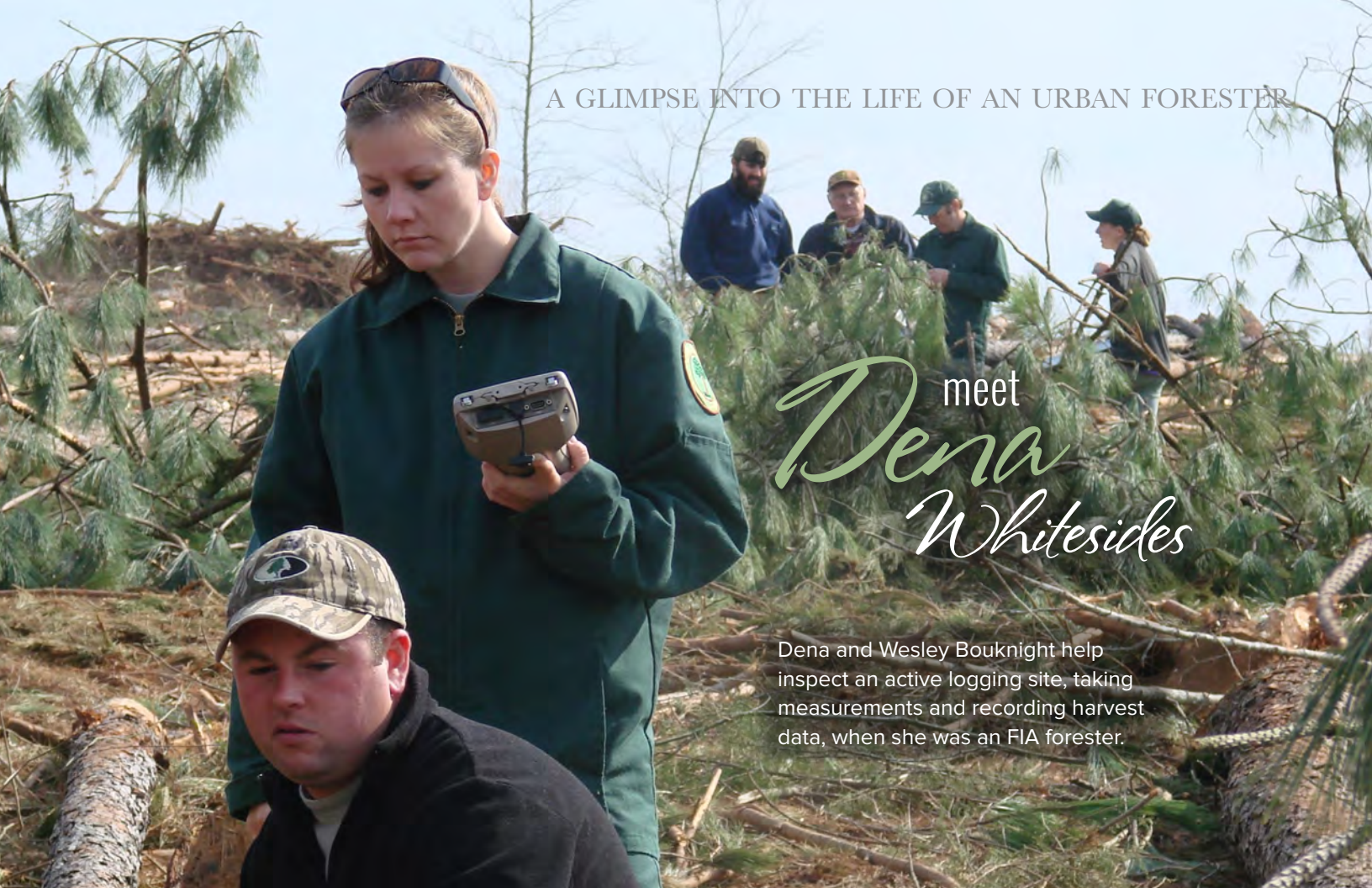


A fond farewell to Laurie Reid

Everyone's favorite entomologist says goodbye to the Forestry Commission this Friday after 10 years as the agency's Forest Health Coordinator.

Laurie has accepted a position as an urban forester with the city of Charlotte (where she lives) and will save herself three hours of commuting time. You'll be missed, Laurie!





meet
*Dena
Whitesides*

Dena and Wesley Bouknight help inspect an active logging site, taking measurements and recording harvest data, when she was an FIA forester.

The inevitable expansion of urban communities has cemented urban forestry as a distinct discipline, and it's no secret the South Carolina Forestry Commission has an outstanding team of urban foresters, which we believe is one of the best in the country.

One member of that team is Dena Whitesides, though most employees know her originally as Dena Jacob. The urban forester for the 17 counties in the Piedmont Region, she was married in October to Doug Whitesides.

Dena loves urban forestry and, now approaching her eighth anniversary with the agency, says she's landed right where she wants to be. "I really love the public service aspect of what I do, working with all the communities in my region, especially the one-on-

one meetings where ideas turn into action," she says. "It's very gratifying to know the relationships I've made and the work I've done with so many community partners has made a difference, an impact."

Wikipedia defines urban forestry as "the care and management of ... tree populations in urban settings for the purpose of improving the urban environment," but Dena will tell you it's so much more. "I work with municipalities, residents, schools and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Employee Spotlight

non-profits to manage their forest lands, yes, but that involves a lot,” she says. “We help them come up with management plans, improve the canopy and forest cover, reduce fire risk, enhance public safety, train tree care professionals and offer all kinds of technical assistance, to name just a few of the things we do.”

Meetings are an unavoidable part of the urban forester’s job, but she still gets to be outside plenty and practice “traditional” forestry just like she dreamed about doing as a kid. A native of northern Illinois, she spent a lot of time with her father’s family in Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, where she would hike, camp and enjoy all kinds of outdoor recreation.

Her supervisor, Urban Forestry Program Coordinator Lowe Sharpe, says he’s actually learned a lot from Dena. “Dena’s experience has been invaluable to me, especially as a traditional forester with no background or training in urban forestry and arboriculture,” he says. “She is well known in the network of urban foresters, planners and arborists as a professional who promotes the art and science of urban and community forestry across the state.”

A graduate of Southern Illinois University, Dena previously worked for three years as a seasonal USFS forest technician on the Shawnee National Forest. After that, she served as a park ranger in a county forest preserve district in Illinois for a year.

Dena started with the Forestry Commission as a Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) forester in Marion, then later in Newberry County, for two years before landing the urban forestry position in 2007. “FIA work,



Dena Whitesides moderates the “Forest Resource Workshop” conducted under one of the Commission’s urban forestry grants from the U.S. Forest Service.

as everyone knows, is hard work; it builds character, and I enjoyed it. But I jumped at the opportunity to get into urban forestry. I think it’s the best job in the world. I really do.”

The Whitesides now live in Newberry with Dena’s 8-year-old daughter Hayden (a competition clogger and honor roll student) and stepchildren Beverly, 14, and Coleman, 12. Sharing a love of the outdoors with their children is a family tradition she’s proud to continue, as they spend much of their free time either at their place on Lake Murray or otherwise outside hiking, hunting or fishing.

Dena can be reached at (803) 391-0330 and DWhitesides@scfc.gov.



Dena assists municipal workers with proper tree-planting techniques.

November service awards

The following employees received certificates in November honoring their many years of service to the Forestry Commission.

Chris King

Niederhof Forestry Center
30 years state and agency service

Anthony McAlhany

Santee Unit Forest Technician
20 years state and agency service

Harvey Belser

Manchester SF Director
20 years state and agency service

Roger Byrd

Lynches River Forest Technician
20 years state and agency service

Moses Maine

Edisto Unit Forest Technician
20 years state and agency service

William Caines

Black River Forest technician
20 years state and agency service

Donna Green

Lynches River Supervisor
20 years state and agency service

Danny Collins

Edisto Unit Supervisor
15 years state and agency service

Loretta Reid

Coastal Dispatch
10 years state and agency service

Blair Long

Piedmont East Forest Technician
10 years state and agency service

Michael Weeks

Piedmont West Unit Forester
10 years state and agency service

Vicki Irick

Coastal Region Administrative Specialist
10 years state service

Programs

Programs

Hartsville neighborhood installs tree-friendly sidewalks

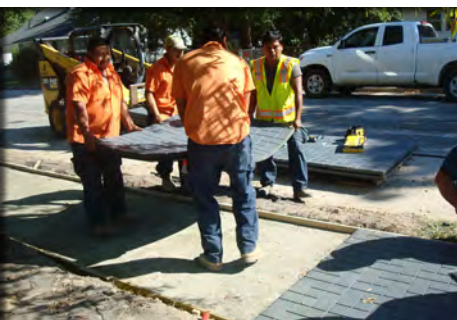
Urban Forestry

– Lois Edwards

Hartsville’s historic Oakdale neighborhood is receiving a pedestrian infrastructure project that’s the first of its kind in the region.

The City of Hartsville installed Eco-Flex rubber sidewalks alongside some sections of Oakdale’s streets in October, an improvement made possible by a S.C. Department of Commerce Community Development block grant. The project is intended to reduce the long-term damage that concrete sidewalks and trees often cause to one another.

The Eco-Flex sidewalk has sections that are fastened with glue and stainless steel deck screws, allowing the sections to be removed temporarily for maintenance work on tree roots. Unlike concrete sidewalks, which must be broken up when removed, these sidewalks may be taken up and used elsewhere after their initial installation. The rubber sidewalks are also not vulnerable to crumbling under pressure from tree roots.



Programs

Programs

Cliffs Valley community named Firewise Community USA

Cliffs Valley, a community in upper Greenville County that partly spans the North Carolina border, was presented a plaque during a meeting Wednesday, Oct. 29 to recognize its Firewise Community/USA status.

Approximately 50 Cliffs Valley residents attended the meeting. Cliffs Valley is one of 24 Firewise Communities/USA in South Carolina and one of more than 1,100 such communities in 41 states.

State Firewise Coordinator Steve Moore, Upstate Firewise Coordinator Bill Wiley and West Piedmont Unit Forester Michael Weeks, along with Glassy Mountain Fire Chief Robert Staples, presented information during the meeting and helped make the presentation.

Cliffs Valley is one of three large residential golf communities in Glassy Mountain Fire District that was assessed for wildfire risk in late 2012. A fire district wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was completed in early 2013 and from recommendations in that CWPP, Cliffs Valley residents expressed interest in the Firewise program. A separate assessment was done of Cliffs Valley and a separate CWPP specifically for Cliffs Valley was written. To attain the national recognition, the community had to meet the following criteria in addition to having the Firewise assessment and CWPP:

- Created a Firewise Committee;
- Held a community Firewise event;



From left to right, Chief Robert Staples, Bill Wiley, Cliffs Valley Firewise Committee Chair Mike Kaplan, Steve Moore and Michael Weeks present the Firewise recognition to Cliffs Valley Property Owners Association President Mark Holland.

- Committed \$2 per capita to the Firewise Program;
- Applied for recognition.

The community has undertaken several steps to decrease wildfire risk and increase awareness of Firewise:

- Joined the Red Flag Fire Alert network;
- Replaced pine straw mulch in public areas including the golf course;
- Alerts incoming contractors to potential wildfire risks;
- Maintains roadsides, flower beds on easements and brush in proper condition with a contract service;
- Is working on an emergency evacuation plan.

We welcome Cliffs Valley to the Firewise Community/USA network.

Firewise

– Bill Wiley



State Forester Gene Kodama, left, and Orangeburg County Project Forester Walt Woodrum, right, greet Clemson's new Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Bob Jones – himself a Clemson forestry alumnaus – during homecoming ceremonies Oct. 25.

Homecoming 2014

The South Carolina Forestry Commission has more than its fair share of Clemson alumni, as the Upstate university is the only one in the state to offer undergraduate and graduate programs in forestry.

Enjoy some of the highlights of Forestry's 2014 homecoming celebration.



Pat Layton was recognized by the Clemson Forestry Alumni Association's immediate past president Jimmy Walters for her leadership and service.



SCFC Stewardship Forester Jaime Jones, new Clemson Forestry Alumni Association president, greets the guests.



Walt Woodrum and forestry consultant Mark Kays chat during the forestry alumni meeting.

Danny Ford speaks to SCSEA

Former Clemson head football coach Danny Ford was the guest speaker at the S.C. State Employees Association Retirees Luncheon Thursday, Oct. 30.

As part of the event, SCSEA officials unveiled their new TV commercial, which features SCFC personnel and equipment.



Walt Woodrum introduced the legendary football coach to the crowd.



OLD FRIENDS

Many of you know SCFC retirees David Free, center, and Mickey Walley, right. Robert Jones, left, supervisor in Abbeville, Greenwood and Laurens counties, wanted to share this photo of himself with David and Mickey to let everyone know they're doing great.

The three met this past weekend on a camping trip at Calhoun Falls State Park to hang out and catch up.

In related news, Mickey's son Mike started with the Forestry Commission as a forestry technician in Chester County the week of Nov. 17.

Career Day held at Pelion Elementary School

SCFC Fleet Manager Doug Mills and Forestry Technician Jeremy Gantt participated in a Career Day program at Pelion Elementary School Oct. 10.

They explained how Forestry Commission personnel work together to fight wildfires and showed off one of the agency's firetracks (the kids' favorite!).



SCFC employees attend SCPRA conference in N. Myrtle Beach



Pee Dee Regional Admin Assistant Susan Gensel, Dispatch Coordinator Libby Martin, and Coastal Region Administrative Specialist Vicki Irick enjoyed the conference.

The Forestry Commission was well represented at the South Carolina Public Records Association's Annual Conference Oct. 22-24 in North Myrtle Beach.

Attending this year's conference from the Commission were Judy Lucas, Tonya Steadman, Lenora Stukes, Susan Gensel, Karen McIntosh, Charlotte

Grant, Vicki Irick and Libby Martin.

As always, the conference was both educational and informative. This year's theme was "Following the Evolution of Information."



The SCPRA Coastal region, which includes Libby Martin and Charlotte Grant, received the outstanding region award at the conference.

Atta Boy

John Hendrix, assistant chief with the Irmo Fire District, wrote us to thank SCFC employees for their expertise assisting the IFD with a recent training and arson investigation:

I just wanted to take a second and pass on a thank you to you and two of your staff members, Sam St. Louis and Jonathan Calore, who have been of an exceptional help to our department.

Being an urban structural fire department, the Irmo Fire District has never made a focus on strengthening our skills in wildland urban interface firefighting. Following making the move from the Lexington County Fire Service to the IFD as their Asst. Chief back in 2012, I quickly recognized wildland firefighting as one of our weaknesses. Having previously built a working relationship while fighting wildland fires in Lexington with Sam, I reached out to him for help in conducting training with our personnel in strengthening their wildland firefighting skills, which he happily offered to do.

For the last two years Sam has conducted training with all of our personnel on a regular basis and it has not only made our firefighters stronger in mitigating wildland fires, but also built such a strong bond between our agencies that even our officers brought up the relationship between the SCFC and IFD earlier this week, as an identified strength in our department's 2015 strategic planning process.

Also, during the past few months we have been plagued by a serial arsonist. Due to a significant amount of the fires being wildland related, our Marshall's office teamed up with Jonathan and Sam both and I must say those guys were the biggest help of all the agencies involved in the task force brought together. From the time we reached out to your agency with this issue, they have been the best investigation partners any department could ask for and we couldn't have done it without them.

With how much these two guys have done for our department, our firefighters and our community, I couldn't pass up dropping you an email to let you know what a difference your guys are making out there. Please pass on a sincere thank you to them from us and we appreciate what you and your agency is doing in service to our state.

Thanks,

John Hendrix

Forester in training

Ryan McIntyre (Newberry FIA) and wife Christi welcomed a healthy baby boy Tuesday, Nov. 11. Joshua Shiloh weighed in at 6 lbs. 6 oz. and 19" long. Mom, Dad and brother Brady are all doing great!



Photo of the week

"Cocky plant"



This photo was sent in from Lloyd Mitchell, who saw this plant in Melissa Fleming's office recently and thought it resembled a gamecock (if you squint).

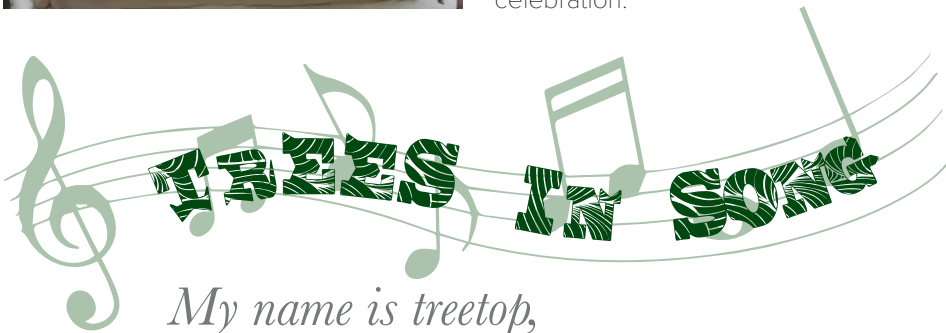
Send your wild,
wacky, weird photos
to Michelle Johnson at
mjohnson@scfc.gov.

Coastal dispatchers celebrate Johnnie Axson's birthday

The Coastal dispatchers celebrated Johnnie Axson's birthday with a delicious cake in Walterboro Oct. 24.



From left to right, Kelly Banks, Deborah Danque, Shelly Toa, Johnnie Axson, Cheryl Clark and Loretta Reid take a break to gather in the Walterboro dispatch center for Johnnie's birthday celebration.



*My name is treetop,
And I'm higher than you'll ever be,
I'm married to my roots here,
Still I feel like I am free.*

Song: "The Waker"
Artist: Widespread Panic
Album: 'Til the Medicine Takes
Listen: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ToKPDidepsw>

Can you think of a song with tree- or forestry-related lyrics? Let us know, and we'll share it with everyone.

Whatcha think?

Please let us know what you think about the redesign of *Tree Country*, which is now an employee-only publication. E-mail Doug Wood, Communications and Public Information Director, at dwood@scfc.gov to share your feedback.

And as always, we welcome your input in providing and improving content. Please send in your photos and information about events going on in your area (recognition ceremonies, important meetings, employee fun and especially fires) to Public Information Coordinator Michelle Johnson at mjohnson@scfc.gov.



Mystery Employee

Riddle me this:
Can you identify
this mystery
employee who
has worked for
the agency for an
amazing 33 years?



Atta Boy

Sand Hills State Forest received a note Oct. 28 from a lady whose truck and horse trailer was stuck in the sand. Brian Davis and Tim Hunt were able to assist and pull her out. She writes:

Tim & Brian were absolutely amazing. They pulled my truck and horse trailer out of the sand as Google Maps had failed miserably. I am so grateful for you!

—Heather Wilkerson

Did you know...?

All the American flags on the moon have been bleached white by radiation from the sun.

NOW AND THEN

The way we look, the way we do things and the equipment we use has changed tremendously since the agency's inception.

-Michelle Johnson
Public Information Coordinator

In this series, I'll be comparing old and recent photos of all things forestry-related in South Carolina: areas, equipment and people. Enjoy!

Mechanized Firefighting Units

The SCFC fights wildfire in a variety of ways, but the primary method is to use a dozer with a fire plow to construct fire breaks.

The dozer is carried on a 10-wheel transport truck or a low boy as part of a tractor plow unit. Every warden and forestry technician are assigned a unit to respond to wildfires.

In 1942, the agency purchased seven John Deere medium farm tractors with three-disc tillers to fight wildfires. These units were transported on four-wheel trailers

pulled by one-and-a-half-ton trucks.

Mechanized firefighting equipment was a major improvement in forest fire suppression. Before then, firefighting was conducted with hand tools such as backpack pumps, rakes, swatters, shovels, buckets, wet burlap bags and pine tops.

Today mechanized equipment is the backbone of our forest fire control organization.



7 Security Habits Of Highly Effective PC Users

You might not think about it when you're browsing the web, shopping online and interacting on social media, but you are the first line of defense against cyber security risks.

Developing and maintaining good habits can make online activity much safer and more enjoyable for you and your colleagues.

Think before you post

Social media provides a convenient, fun way to stay in touch with friends and family. But be cautious about what you post. Understand both personal and business risks, and take the following precautions:

- Always comply with your company's rules for business conduct;
- Ask friends and family to keep your personal information private, including relationships;
- Be cautious about participating in games and surveys or clicking on links suggested by others;
- Review and update your social media privacy and security settings often.

Use daily

Bad habits might die hard, but good habits can protect you from cyber threats. You are the first line of defense in protecting yourself, your colleagues and your devices against security risks. And as criminal methods and tactics are becoming more advanced, it's more important than ever to establish and maintain good security habits.

—from *HP Technology at Work*, part 7/7 (March 2014)

FOR ESTERY

in the news

(click the titles to read the stories online)

Students study forestry conservation at Wood Magic Forest Fair

WBTW—Nov. 18, 2014

The Wood Magic Forest fair continues in Georgetown County. It's a chance for Eastern Carolina students to learn about forestry conservation and other parts of nature. Wednesday, fourth graders from Montessori of Florence and Waccamaw Intermediate learned ways they can help South Carolina's forests prosper.



Institute aims to create new markets for wood-based construction materials

Pickens Sentinel—Nov. 11, 2014

Clemson's Wood Utilization + Design Institute (WU+D) will leverage the university's assets in forestry, architecture, construction science and engineering to design, test and market innovative, sustainable wood-based materials for use in a commercial construction market dominated by steel and concrete.



GEORGETOWN COUNTY, S.C. (WBTW) - The Wood Magic Forest fair continues in Georgetown County. It's a chance for Eastern Carolina students to learn about forestry conservation and other parts of nature. Wednesday, fourth graders from Montessori of Florence and Waccamaw Intermediate learned ways they can help South Carolina's forests prosper.

The classroom was outdoors for fourth graders at Waccamaw Intermediate School Wednesday. Jen Gallup's students are learning

SCFC Environmental Education Coordinator Stephanie Kolok speaks to WBTW about Wood Magic.

NASA video brings carbon dioxide pollution to life in vivid, swirling colors

CBS News—Nov. 18, 2014

NASA has unveiled an ultra-high resolution computer model that shows plumes and swirls of the greenhouse gas - in vivid reds, oranges and yellows - as it disperses around the globe, blown by the winds. It also illustrates the striking difference in carbon dioxide levels between the northern and southern hemispheres.

Auburn Will Plant Trees to Replace Ones Poisoned by Alabama Fan

New York Times—Nov. 8, 2014

Two live oak trees about 35 feet tall will be planted at Toomer's Corner in Auburn to replace those poisoned by an Alabama fan, but the tradition of rolling the oaks with toilet paper will have to wait at least a year, university officials said.



Workers remove weakening limbs at Auburn's historic Toomer's Corner after university officials determined they were a safety concern.

NASA using drones to spot wildfires

Associated Press—Oct. 8, 2014

NASA plans to fly small drones to spot fires in a wildlife refuge along the Virginia and North Carolina border next spring, marking the first time the agency has [used] drones ... for wildfire spotting on the East Coast.

National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook from the Predictive Services National Interagency Fire Center

Outlook Period: November, December and January through February 2015

Executive Summary

The November, December and January through February 2015 significant wildland fire potential forecasts included in this outlook represent the cumulative forecasts of the eleven Geographic Area Predictive Services Units and the National Predictive Services Unit.

November

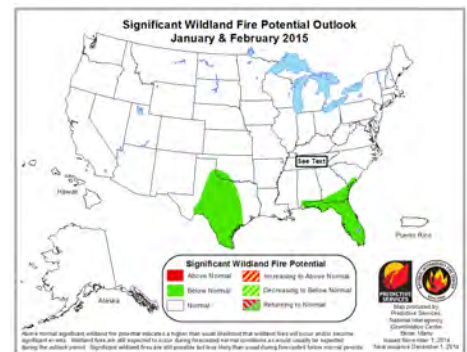
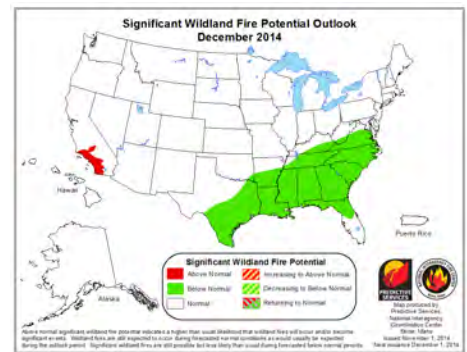
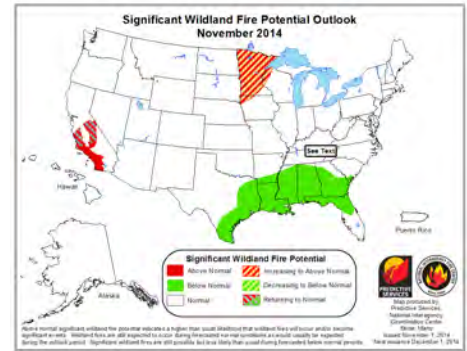
- Above normal fire potential continues across portions of central and southern California. Long term drought and a potential for offshore winds will keep potential elevated through November.
- Most of Minnesota along with portions of Iowa and Wisconsin will have elevated fire potential for November. This is not expected to persist into December.
- Below normal fire potential will continue across the Gulf Coast states.

December

- Fire potential will continue to diminish in California, leaving on coastal areas of southern California with above normal significant fire potential.
- Below normal fire potential will expand across most of the South and Mid-Atlantic regions.

January through February

- No areas of above normal fire potential are expected for this period.
- Below normal fire potential will continue across central and southern Texas, Florida, and southern Georgia.



South Carolina Fire Activity

Month And Year To Date

Comparison to previous 5- and 10-year average

Time Period	NOV		JULY-NOV		FISCAL YEAR	
	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres	Fires	Acres
5 Year Average	125	403.1	528	2,311.0	2,109	13,566.2
10 Year Average	146	461.4	579	2,318.14	2,458	16,656.8
Current FY ¹	39	72.1	314	1,235.3	314	1,235.3

¹To date for current fiscal year

Career Opportunities at the South Carolina Forestry Commission

Job Title: Mechanic III

Closing Date: Nov. 23, 2014

Hiring Range: \$26,139-\$37,250

Location: Spartanburg County

Job Responsibilities

Performs skilled routine and general maintenance to automotive and fire suppression equipment, such as trucks, tractors (diesel and gas powered), and miscellaneous equipment. Pulls engines and transmissions, rebuilds engines, replaces wheel seals, rotates tires, changes undercarriage parts on bulldozers, replaces bed boards on low boy trailers and other miscellaneous duties. Conducts diagnostic testing and identifies problems to determine vehicle and equipment malfunctions; repairs vehicles and heavy equipment in the repair shop and during service calls. Performs welding activities.

Minimum And Additional Requirements

A high school diploma and two (2) years of work experience directly related to the area of employment to include automotive and equipment repair, diesel engines, heavy

equipment and light duty vehicles. Welding experience is required. Position requires a Commercial Driver's License (CDL).

Candidate must pass the written CDL test before employment. CDL driving portion passed within 90 working days of employment. Completion of a drug screen is required.

Preferred Qualifications

Applicant has a Commercial Driver's License, Class A.

Additional Comments

Must be able to lift a minimum of 50 pounds and respond to service calls after hours and on weekends.

Overnight travel may be required for large fire incidents in the state that require a mechanic on duty. Out-of-state travel may be required for Southeastern fire incidents.

HR News: 2015 SHP Standard Plan Copayments, Deductibles Readjusted

PEBA has determined that the copayments, annual deductibles and coinsurance maximums for the State Health Plan Standard Plan will not increase as much as previously expected. Please see the updated numbers below. The 2015 Comparison of Health Plan Benefits and the 2015 Summary of Benefits and Coverage: State Health Plan Standard Plan have been updated with the new amounts.

2015 Standard Plan Benefits			
Annual deductible		Outpatient facility services	\$95
Single	\$445	Emergency care	\$159
Family	\$890	Prescription drugs	
Coinsurance maximum		Retail	
In-network		Tier 1	\$9
Single	\$2,540	Tier 2	\$38
Family	\$5,080	Tier 3	\$63
Out-of-network		Mail-order	
Single	\$5,080	Tier 1	\$22
Family	\$10,160	Tier 2	\$95
Physicians Office Visits	\$12*	Tier 3	\$158
		Copayment maximum	\$2,500*

* These amounts were the same in 2014.

PEBA Offering Health Insurance Enrollment for Same-Sex Spouses

Columbia, S.C. – November 20, 2014 – By recent decisions of the federal courts, South Carolina’s prohibition upon the recognition of same-sex marriages has been found unconstitutional. In light of those rulings, the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA) is holding an enrollment period for subscribers who have valid, out-of-state same-sex marriages that predate November 18, 2014, to add insurance coverage for their same-sex spouses and children of their same-sex spouses through December 19. A subscriber who enters into a valid, same-sex marriage in South Carolina or another state after November 18, 2014, will have the usual 31 days from the date of marriage in which to add coverage for his or her spouse or stepchild.

To enroll a same-sex spouse, individuals eligible for insurance coverage through PEBA must complete a Notice of Election form and return it, along with a copy of one of the following, to their benefits office:

- Marriage license
- Page 1 of the couple’s federal tax return with the financial information marked out
- The Common Law Marriage Affidavit (attached to the e-mail through which this newsletter was distributed).

To enroll a child of a same-sex spouse, a long-form birth certificate is required in addition to the documentation proving the same-sex couple is married.

Same-sex spouses and the children of same-sex spouses will be eligible for health, dental, vision and Dependent Life coverage through PEBA beginning November 18. For a timely enrollment, the effective date of coverage will be November 18 or the date of marriage, whichever is later.

Please note that, after December 19, changes in coverage for same-sex spouses and the children of same-sex spouses will be allowed only during open enrollment, which occurs every October, or within 31 days of a special eligibility situation, such as a marriage or a loss of other coverage.

For more information about the enrollment period, please contact PEBA at 803-734-0678 (Greater Columbia area) or 888-260-9430 (toll-free outside the Columbia area).

About the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority

The South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority is the state agency responsible for the administration and management of the state’s employee insurance programs and retirement systems.