

## Risk Management Programs Can Help Reduce Liabilities

**M**ost local governments struggle with finding low cost ways of dealing with employee safety and potential legal liabilities. Without adequate training or information, local governments can be hit hard by claims and lawsuits. Costly and unexpected property liability and worker's compensation claims can derail municipal and county budgets. Fortunately, programs to curb the potential for claims don't have to be expensive or complicated. There are many low cost or free training programs and information seminars provided by various state and local agencies to assist in avoiding common problems and liabilities. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to finding solutions for these issues is in knowing where to look.

The Appalachian Council of Governments has implemented a number of new programs to address local government liability issues. ACOG assistance includes:

- Performing on-site risk analysis for insight into unsafe practices and hazardous environments;
- Establishing employee safety programs;
- Establishing back-to-work programs for workers compensation claimants;
- Coordinating OSHA training and pre-inspection services;



- Coordinating defensive driving classes;
- Performing analysis of loss history;
- Inventorying of property and capital for proper insurance coverage;
- Protection from third party contractor liability; and
- Assisting with special events and emergency action planning.

If you feel that your jurisdiction is not doing all that it can to reduce the cost of liability claims, contact Mike Sell at 241-4647 for more information

## In Memoriam



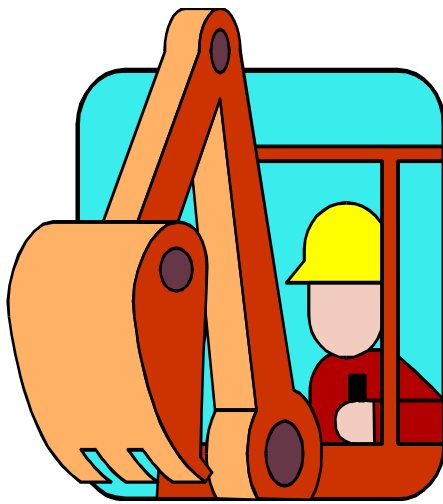
Patrick B. Harris, known to most of us as "Mr. Pat," passed away June 27, 2001, at the age of 90. Elected 12 times to the S. C. House of Representatives (1969-1994), he was an advocate for many worthwhile causes, including improved services and care for the mentally ill, veterans, and the state's older population.

Mr. Pat was also a firm believer in the concepts of "regionalism" and inter-governmental cooperation. During his early years in the Legislature, he was instrumental in helping secure state funding for the state's emerging regional councils, most of which were known as "councils of governments" or "COGs." He continued to be an avid supporter of the concept of regional cooperation, and took every opportunity to enhance the role of regional councils in helping shape South Carolina's future progress.

As a hands-on practitioner of re-  
*(Mr. Pat continued on page 2)*

## Cherokee County Awarded \$500,000 to Address Water Problems

**T**hrough the cooperative efforts of Cherokee County, the Town of Blacksburg, the Gaffney Board of Public Works, and the Grant Services Department of the Appalachian Council of Governments, a \$500,000 Community Development



Block Grant (CDBG) has been awarded by the State Department of Commerce to alleviate problems associated with dry or contaminated wells in the Leagon Road area of the county. This area, which is just outside the Town of Blacksburg, has been suffering for several years from wells that are running dry and water with high levels of mineral deposits and/or coliform contamination. Every property owner surveyed stated that they were having problems with their water, and most used bottled water for drinking and cooking.

The project will involve the construction of approximately 17,600 feet of 8-inch and 2,650 feet of 6-inch water line with 19 fire hydrants. Part of the area will be served by the Gaffney Board of Public Works and part by the Town of Blacksburg, since both have existing lines in the area that can be extended. Approximately 66 households and 191 people will benefit from

this project. All of the homes occupied by low-to-moderate income persons will be connected to the water lines at no charge to the occupant.

The Grants Services Department will administer this project for Cherokee County. For more information,

## Elderly Still Receive One-Cent Grocery Tax Reduction

**Now that Gov. Hodges has vetoed the sales tax reduction on groceries, does this mean that elderly residents will no longer get a one-cent tax reduction?**

The one-cent sales tax reduction provided under a longstanding law to residents 85 years old and older is separate from the recent tax reduction on certain food items. As such, the reduction for the elderly will not be affected by the recent elimination of the grocery tax reduction. While most residents will again pay 5 percent sales tax at the grocery store, those residents 85 years old and older are still entitled to a 4 percent tax rate.

Most merchants should know the law, but if you are 85 years old or older and would like a card you can use to explain this law, call (803) 898-5419. To report a store that isn't following the law, call the Department of Revenue's Sales Tax Division at (803) 898-5788. Agency officials will call that store and explain the law.

**How do I go about renewing the handicapped plate on my car?**

If you qualify for a permanent handicapped plate at the time of your original application, you can renew it just like any other plate at any Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office.

*(Tax continued on page 3)*

## Senior Action Volunteer Represents State in National Pageant

**O**n August 15, Senior Action volunteer Jacqueline Haymond, who was named Ms. South Carolina Senior 2001, will travel to Charleston to compete in the American Classic Woman National Pageant 2002. This pageant gives honor to women who have reached the "Age of Elegance" and searches for the lady who best exemplifies the dignity, maturity, and inner beauty of all Senior Americans.

The preliminary competition will be held at 2 p.m. August 17, followed by a final competition August 18 at the College of Charleston.

Locally, Senior Action sponsors the Ms. Greenville Senior Pageant, which is held every two years.



*(Mr. Pat continued from page 1)*

gionalism, Mr. Pat was also instrumental in guiding the growth and development of the S. C. Appalachian Council of Governments. He was appointed as the Anderson County Legislative Delegation representative to the COG Board of Directors shortly after the COG was reorganized in 1971. He continued to serve in that capacity until his death. Mr. Harris was elected chairman of the COG Board an unprecedented three times, and served on the Council's Executive Committee and as the COG's representative to the S. C. Association of Regional Councils (SCARC) throughout most of his tenure as a member of the Board. In 1997, Mr. Harris became the Council's only honorary lifetime member.

His contributions to the State of South Carolina, to regionalism, and to his fellow man are too numerous to ac-

## New City Fact Sheets Now Available

**O**btaining statistical information on Upstate cities and towns is now easier than ever! Municipal Fact Sheets, a component of *infoMentum – A Decision Support System for Upstate South Carolina*, have recently been updated to reflect the



most current information available. The categories of information presented in these documents include: Population, Income, Housing, Labor Market, Retail Sales, Climate, and Economic Development Contacts. The information is gathered from a variety of sources, including the U. S. Census Bureau, the S. C. Department of Revenue and Taxation, the S. C. Employment Security Commission, and the National Oceanic Atmospheric Association. Thanks to the recent release of certain Census 2000 data, these Fact Sheets present new housing count information, as well as population figures broken down by race, age, and household characteristics. Information on Income and Educational Attainment of the Population will be updated as Census 2000 data becomes available.

In addition to the updated information, these Fact Sheets now have a new look! They have been reformatted to improve readability and to graphically complement the new *infoMentum* logo. Yet another new feature is the incorporation of an introductory paragraph that

provides a brief history of the municipality, along with other pertinent facts. Web links for related information are also listed at the end of each document.

*infoMentum* also provides County Fact Sheets, as well as Fact Sheets on area airports. The Information Services staff is currently working to expand the offering of Fact Sheets to include Upstate colleges and universities. To obtain a copy of the Fact Sheet for your city or town, or to learn more about the *infoMentum* Suite of Services, please contact the ACOG Information Services

## Development Corporation Approves Three Loans

The Board of Directors of the Appalachian Development Corporation has recently considered and approved the following loan requests:

Porter's of Greenville, South Carolina, was approved for a loan in the amount of \$150,000. The owner, David Porter, requested the funds to help establish a production line to manufacture locks, alarm systems, and lighting systems for containers and truck trailers. The ADC funding will be used to purchase equipment and for working capital. Primary funding is coming through a group of Upstate Banks including BB&T, CCB, and Peoples National of Easley. Six to eight additional jobs are to be created.

A loan of \$200,000 was approved for Brown-Oglesby Funeral Home in Seneca, South Carolina. The principal, Charles Oglesby, requested funds to provide permanent financing for an expansion of his present facility in Seneca. The expansion will allow him

*(Loans continued on page 4)*

## City Manager Roy Lane



The Upstate lost another good friend with the passing of Lee "Roy" Lane, City Manager of Spartanburg. Roy died on June 27 due to complications from cancer surgery. Roy is survived by his wife, Nancy, and daughter, Maura.

Roy served four years as City Manager of Spartanburg and was widely respected as a leader and innovator. He worked actively to promote his vision of Spartanburg and its city government. One of his many accomplishments was the successful launch of Spartanburg's Downtown Renaissance Project. He was also highly regarded by local leaders and citizens for placing Spartanburg's municipal government on the cutting edge of responsive customer service and effective organizational development.

Roy had a close relationship with the staff of the Appalachian Council of Governments, and we will miss him as a colleague and a friend. Our prayers go out to his family.

*(Tax continued from page 2)*

You should receive an updated sticker for a permanent plate in the mail once you've paid your car taxes. If you don't, check with your local DMV.

To get a disabled license plate or placard for the first time, you'll need to pick up an application at any Division of Motor Vehicles branch office or write for one at the Department of Public Safety, P. O. Box 1498, Columbia, S. C. 29216. The application should be returned to a department branch office or mailed to the above address. The application must be signed by a physician certifying that you have a physical disability requiring the use of a supporting device and stating whether the disability is permanent or

## The Town of Pacolet Receives Enhancement

**T**own officials in Pacolet recently received a S. C. Department of Transportation (DOT) Enhancement Grant for the installation of a sidewalk to provide a pedestrian link between the Pacolet Elementary School and the Middle School of Pacolet. The project area is a one-mile stretch of McDowell Street and



Sunny Acres Road in the Town of Pacolet. This side-

walk will connect the Mayesville Community and other established neighborhoods with the Pacolet Elementary School and the Middle School of Pacolet. In addition, the sidewalk will provide pedestrian access to the Spartanburg County Recreation Area located between the two schools.

This project was one of 30 TEA-21 enhancement projects across the state that received federal funding from DOT. The cost of this project is approximately \$192,000. The city provided a match for the project of over \$38,000.

Chip Bentley, with the Appalachian Council of Governments, assisted the town in preparing the grant application. For more information on TEA-21 Enhancement Grant opportuni-

### Fact ...

Spartanburg County contains 13 of the region's municipalities; its neighbor, Cherokee County, contains only 2 incorporated municipalities.

## Pets Provide Perfect Therapy for Seniors

**T**here are no big-name acts in this touring show; Jesse, Juliet, Caesar and Tabatha are household names only in their own households. Big hearts are abundant. FirstPAWS, a pet therapy program developed three years ago, makes eight visits to Upstate nursing homes each month. They're all social calls, one reason the ministry is among the area's most unusual.

Another reason is the stars of the show: about two dozen dogs and one cat. They make days brighter, both for their traveling companions and for the nursing home residents. "I love it. I feel so blessed," says FirstPAWS volunteer Myrtle Hutchinson, 79. "I go about every week. I'd go every day if I could. It's a wonderful thing, because at first you'll see people who



seem uninterested," Hutchinson says, "But when they see the dogs, it's like a light bulb turning on."

The chemistry repeatedly fascinates Nancy Harvell, another frequent volunteer. "We've seen residents who don't respond to anything else, but they respond to the dogs," say Harvell, whose golden retriever, Murphy, and mixed breed, Charlie, are among the fan favorites on this tour. "We may have nothing else in common, but they

begin to tell us about a dog they had at some time in their life, and it opens the communication. There are so many benefits. I've grown attached to some of the residents," Harvell says. "I've done a lot of volunteer work over the years, but nothing has touched me like this."

FirstPAWS began in 1998 as a ministry of First Presbyterian Church, about half of the 20+ active volunteers are members of the church. The pet owners range in age from late 20s to late 70s, says founder Ann Hutchinson, who made the suggestion for the program shortly after joining First Presbyterian. For Hutchinson, the ministry has been instructional and rewarding. "Animals don't see people as being frail or sick. They see someone willing to love them and show kindness to them," Hutchinson says. "This is the way we need to see people."

(Reprint of an article appearing in *The*



(Loans continued from page 3)

to double his service capacity. The Business Development Corporation of Columbia is providing primary financing in the amount of \$400,000. Three additional jobs will be added to the current staff of five within the next 24 months.

Kincaid Home Furnishings of Greenville, South Carolina, was approved for a loan in the amount of \$125,000. The principals, Ross Fletcher and Richard Riley, are opening a Kincaid's Furniture Gallery on Pleasantburg Drive. The ADC funds will be used for working capital and equipment, with primary financing by Business Development Corporation and Kincaid Manufac-



## Calendar of Events

- August 1 Title V Training, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Columbia.
- August 5-10 Summer School of Gerontology.
- August 16 Aging Directors Meeting, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., COG Training Program.
- August 17 SC4A Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Columbia.
- August 21 DHHS/AAA Joint Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Columbia.
- August 22 Aging Advisory Committee Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Council Board Room, DHHS Regional Visit to Appalachian AAA.
- August 23 Joint Conference on Aging Planning Meeting, 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Columbia.
- August 24 COG Board of Directors Meeting, 10:30 a.m., Council Board Room.

---

## **VIEWPOINT**

**Appalachian Council of Governments**  
**P. O. Drawer 6668**  
**Greenville, South Carolina 29606**

---

PRSRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
GREENVILLE, SC  
PERMIT NO. 1604

---