

## Liberty Adopts Updated Zoning Ordinance

**O**n January 14, 2002, the City of Liberty adopted an update to the City's zoning ordinance at a second reading by the City Council. The adoption of this updated ordinance is a culmination of over a year's effort by the City Planning Commission and City Council. The Appalachian Council of Governments assisted the City of



Liberty with the development of the Zoning Ordinance update. The updates to the existing ordinance are in response to changing conditions within the city and address the concerns voiced by citizens over the past few years. The Planning Commission and City Council have done well in addressing these issues and have adopted an ordinance that is sensitive to the needs of the City of Liberty.

The purpose of the zoning ordinance is to establish standards, procedures, and minimum requirements in accordance with the comprehensive plan, to regulate and control the use, bulk, design, and location of land and buildings; the creation and administration of zoning districts; and

the general development of real estate in the city. Unlike a land use plan, the zoning ordinance is a regulatory document addressing the general and supplementary regulations, administrative mechanisms, code compliance, zoning, off-street parking, sign regulations, and landscaping and buffering requirements.



## Appalachian COG Receives United Way Awards

Appalachian COG recently was the recipient of three 2001 Greenville United Way awards. The "Campaign Award of Advancement" recognized the COG for an increase in employee giving of 25 percent or more. The "Campaign Award of Excellence" reflected the COG's having met two of the criteria necessary to qualify for the "Chairman's Award." Finally, the "Chairman's Award" acknowledged the COG for meeting four of the United Way employee giving criteria. Overall, the Greenville campaign exceeded its stated goal, bringing in \$11,511,051. A special thanks to Celia Clark, the COG's 2001 Campaign Coordinator, and Steve Pelissier, the COG's most generous contributor, and new member of the Campaign Palmetto Society.

## Welcome Aboard!



Ms. Katy Goforth comes to us as Workforce Program Specialist from Tri-County Technical College, where she taught as an adjunct English Instructor. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Clemson University in Speech and Communications and a Master's degree from Clemson University in Professional Communications. Ms. Goforth has done extensive work with the National Dropout Prevention Center as the Program Assistant to the Learn and Serve Exchange and as the webmaster of the Center's site. She is an active member of the Girl Scouts of America and spends her spare time tutoring students in English composition. Her goal is to be able to serve the community through her technical and teaching expertise.

### *Did You Know?*

The Appalachian COG was the first regional council formed in South Carolina. In 1965 it was known as the Appalachian Advisory Commission, which was created to advise the Governor on the use of Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) funds.

# Small Towns Technical Assistance Program

ACOG staff has been working under a new program with the Towns of Pelzer, West Pelzer, Norris, Six Mile and Reidville over the past four months



Town of Pelzer and West Pelzer

providing a range of training and technical assistance. Each of the Town Councils has recently received training in key areas of municipal administration



Town of Norris

including South Carolina Home Rule, planning, annexation and general municipal management. In February, ACOG will be facilitating individual



Town of Reidville

Council retreats, and conducting strategic planning and goal setting exercises.

The towns are also receiving

computer training, programming assistance and general consulting. The Small Towns Program is a pilot project conducted with the support of the Appalachian Regional Commission. ACOG hopes to expand the program next year to include additional small towns. Contact Joe Newton for

## Advocating For Quality of Life in Long Term Care Facilities



Think about your own day and how much your mood is affected by:

- \* getting a good night's sleep?
- \* turning lights on and off as you like?
- \* receiving friendly responses from others?
- \* having the freedom to say "No"?
- \* listening to your own music?
- \* hearing constant, often loud noises?
- \* living in cluttered surroundings?
- \* having some control over your room?
- \* having hot coffee in the morning?
- \* feeling secure and safe at home?
- \* having privacy when you need it?
- \* having some control over what you do?
- \* deciding when and what to eat?
- \* being able to choose what you'll wear?
- \* seeing dust balls on the floor?

- \* waking up quietly and gradually?

### What is Quality of Life in a Nursing Home?

According to survey research, "quality of life" means that residents feel good about living in a home if they have kind, caring staff, have choices and control over their daily lives, and are able to maintain their normal routines.

### Your Relative or Friend's Perspective

Think about your relative's routines prior to entering a nursing home.

- \* What gave meaning to their life?
- \* What were sources of pride?
- \* How did they organize their day?
- \* What added to the enjoyment of each day?
- \* What detracted from their day?

Think about how many of these elements are present in their daily life in the nursing home.

### What is the Basic Standard for Quality of Life?

The Nursing Home Reform Law states: *A nursing facility must care for its residents in such a manner and in such an environment as will promote maintenance or enhancement of the quality of life of each resident.* Care must be delivered in a way that supports quality of life. Quality of life must be individualized for each resident. Facilities cannot rely on a few standard approaches to maintaining and enhancing quality of life for all residents. Just as the quality of *care* standard means that residents should maintain their *physical* condition after they enter a facility, the quality of *life* standard is that residents' emotional well-being also should remain the same.

### How Does Quality of Life Become a Reality?

- \* **Resident's Rights** - This law clearly identifies resident's rights as major

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## Governor Hodges Announces Tobacco Settlement Grants



At a January 10 press conference held at the Oconee County Airport, Governor Jim Hodges and Commerce Secretary Charles Way announced the recipients of grants awarded from the S. C. Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Fund. The Department of Commerce received 214 preliminary applications, requesting over \$560 million. They requested 96 Round 2 applications totaling \$164 million and assigned points to each application based on several criteria. This program, funded by proceeds from the Tobacco Settlement revenue, will provide \$80.6 million to 65 projects in 43 counties in South Carolina. Over \$7.7 million was approved for the following seven projects in the Upstate:

- Anderson County - \$1,039,400 to provide sewer service to the Highway 8/I-85 interchange;
- Anderson County - \$744,000 to provide sewer service between Starr and Iva along Highway 81;
- Town of Honea Path - \$121,419 to construct a 1-million-gallon water tank to provide the town and the surrounding area with fresh water;
- Town of Blacksburg - \$950,473 to provide water and sewer service to a new industrial park located at Highway 29 at I-85;
- Town of Salem - \$623,740 to extend water lines to open up the Highway 11 corridor and improve service around Salem;

- Pickens County - \$3,363,737 to construct a new sewer trunk line to open up the Highway 123 corridor between Easley and Greenville; and
- City of Wellford - \$936,000 to extend sewer service to allow development along two miles of Highway 29.

Congratulations to these grant recipients.

## 2001 Year End Labor Market Review



The region experienced a significant rise in the rate of layoffs in 2001, compared to previous years. An analysis of *Rapid Response Reports*, from the S. C. Employment Security Commission (SCESC), indicates that the majority of layoffs, over 54%, were textile related.

The overall layoff rate for the region in 2001 was 1.9%, up from .45% in 2000 and .41% in 1999. The six counties suffered 10,374 job losses last year, as reported to the SCESC. Anderson County had the lowest layoff rate in 2001, while Cherokee County had the highest rate

in the region. All mass layoffs reported to the SCESC from Cherokee and Pickens Counties in 2001 were textile related.

At the same time, the average labor force for the region grew by 11,670, up 2.2% from 2000. The growth rate of the labor force between 1999 and 2000 was 1.4%.

The Information Services Department publishes a detailed inventory of economic activity in the region quarterly. To purchase a copy, please contact one of our Economic Information Analysts. Yearly



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ingredients of quality of life.

- \* **Resident Assessment** - The assessment process is an opportunity for you to help the facility support or enhance quality of life.
- \* **Care Planning** - Care planning is a key time to talk to facility staff about making the nursing home environment more conducive to the resident's comfort and enjoyment of life.
- \* **Survey Process** - The surveyors interview individual residents, a group of residents, and some family members in an effort to look at the quality of life *through the eyes of the residents*.

**If these methods mentioned above do not accomplish the desired quality of life for your resident or if you need our assistance in any way, please contact the Appalachian Council of Governments' Long Term Care Ombudsman toll free:**

Anderson County	225-3268
Cherokee County	489-6960
Greenville County	242-9733
Oconee County	882-7538
Pickens County	855-0163

# AARP 2002 Annual Update

## Public Benefit Figures - January 2002 Edition

### Social Security Retirement and Survivors Benefits – 2002 Figures

Many figures used to calculate Social Security Retirement and Survivors Benefits are revised annually, as are the figures used to determine the insured status of the worker and how much a retired worker may earn.

- Tax rate for employee and employer: **7.65%** each (Of the 7.65% tax rate, 6.2 percent pays for Social Security benefits and 1.45 percent finances Medicare's hospital insurance program.)
- Tax rate for self-employed: **15.30%**
- Maximum annual income subject to Social Security tax: **\$84,900**
- Quarter of coverage: **\$870** equals one quarter of coverage
- Retirement earnings test exempt earnings limit – age 65 and up: **all earnings exempt** (retroactive to January 1, 2000)
- Retirement earnings test exempt earnings limit for individual turning 65 in 2002: **\$30,000** per year (\$2,500/month) [Applies only to earnings for months prior to attaining age 65. \$1 in benefits will be withheld for every \$3 in earnings above limit. There is no limit beginning the month individuals attain age 65.]
- Retirement earnings test exempt earnings limit - under age 65: **\$11,280** per year (\$940/month) [\$1 in benefits withheld for every \$2 in earnings above the limit]
- Maximum benefit for worker retiring at age 65 in January of 2002 with maximum earnings history: **\$1,660** per month
- Average monthly benefit: **\$874** per month

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI) – 2002 Figures

The figures used to determine SSI eligibility change annually, as do the federal benefit levels.

- **SSI Income Limits** vary from state to state due to work-related exclusions or self-support plans. Special calculations applied when applicant has a combination of earned and unearned income
- **SSI Resource Limits:** Individual - **\$2,000**; Couple - **\$3,000**
- Federal benefit rate – individual: **\$545** per month
- Federal benefit rate – eligible couple: **\$817** per month
- Essential Person Increment: **\$273** per month (individual)

### Social Security Disability Benefits – 2002 Figures

Figures used to determine a worker's insured status are revised annually. Figures raising presumptions about ability to work are revised periodically.

- Substantial gainful activity (SGA): **\$780** earnings per month
- SGA, statutorily blind beneficiary: **\$1,300** earnings per month
- Tax rate for employee and employer: **7.65%** each
- Tax rate for self-employed: **15.30%**
- Maximum annual income subject to social security tax: **\$84,900**
- Quarter of coverage: **\$870** equals one quarter of coverage

### Medicare – 2002 Figures

The figures used to calculate Medicare benefits are revised annually.

- Part A premium – No premium for fully insured applicants; **\$319**/month for applicants with 0-29 quarters; **\$175**/month for certain applicants with 30 quarters of coverage (OBRA '93 provided for a reduction in the monthly premium for certain categories of individuals not entitled

to Social Security or Railroad Retirement who purchase Medicare coverage. These include individuals who: 1) had at least 30 quarters of coverage under Social Security; 2) were married and had been married for the previous one-year period to an individual who had at least 30 quarters of coverage; 3) had been married to an individual for at least one year at the time of the individual's death and the individual had at least 30 quarters of coverage and the marriage lasted at least ten years.)

- Part A SNF co-insurance: **\$101.50** per year for days 21 through 100
- Part A inpatient hospital deductible: **\$812** per spell of illness plus; **\$203** per day for days 61-90; **\$406** per day for days 91-150 (lifetime reserve days)
- Part B deductible: **\$100** per year
- Part B premium: **\$54.00** per month
- Part B coinsurance: **20%** of approved charge
- Balance billing: **115%** of Medicare's approved charge

### Medicaid-Spousal Impoverishment – 2002 Figures

- Maximum Monthly Maintenance Needs Allowance (without fair hearing or court order): **\$2,232**
- Minimum Monthly Maintenance Needs Allowance (2001): **\$1,451 – 48 States and D.C.; \$1,670 – Hawaii; \$1,814 – Alaska** (The minimum protected income amount changes yearly when new poverty figures are published in the spring of each year. States are required to use the new figures until July 1.)
- Maximum Resource Allowance (without fair hearing or court order): **\$89,280**
- Minimum Resource Allowance: **\$17,856**

*(Railroad Benefits continued on page 5)*

## AARP 2002 Annual Update (Continued)

Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) 2001 Figures*‡	
<b>QMB</b> (income at 100% Poverty)	
Income Limit (48 states and D. C.)	Resource Limit
1 person: \$ <b>716</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>736</b> 2 people: \$ <b>968</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>988</b>	Individual: \$ <b>4,000</b>  Couple: \$ <b>6,000</b>
<u><b>Hawaii</b></u> 1 person: \$ <b>825</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>845</b> 2 people: \$ <b>1,114</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,134</b>	
<u><b>Alaska</b></u> 1 person: \$ <b>895</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>915</b> 2 people: \$ <b>1,210</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,230</b>	

Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) 2001 Figures* ‡	
<b>SLMB</b> (income at 120% Poverty)	
Income Limit (48 states and D. C.)	Resource Limit
1 person: \$ <b>859</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>879</b> 2 people: \$ <b>1,161</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,181</b>	Individual: \$ <b>4,000</b>  Couple: \$ <b>6,000</b>
<u><b>Hawaii</b></u> 1 person: \$ <b>989</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,009</b> 2 people: \$ <b>1,336</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,356</b>	
<u><b>Alaska</b></u> 1 person: \$ <b>1,073</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,093</b> 2 people: \$ <b>1,451</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = \$ <b>1,471</b>	

\*These figures change yearly when new poverty figures are published in the spring of each year.

‡Income limits for eligibility in Medicare Buy-In Programs may be higher in some states.

(Railroad Benefits continued from page 4)

### Railroad Retirement Benefits – 2002 Figures

Many figures used to calculate railroad retirement benefits are revised annually, as are the figures used to determine how much a retired worker may earn.

- Tax rate for employee and employer – Tier I: **7.65%** each (Of the 7.65% tax rate, 6.2% pays for Social Security benefits and 1.45 percent finances Medicare's hospital insurance program.)
- Tax rate for employee – Tier II: **4.90%**

## AARP 2002 Annual Update (Continued)

<b>Qualified Disabled and Working Individuals Program (QDWI)* 2001 Figures**</b>	
<b>QDWI</b> (income at 200% Poverty)	
<b>Income Limit (48 states and D. C.)</b>	<b>Resource Limit</b>
1 person: <b>\$1,432</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$1,452</b> 2 people: <b>\$1,935</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$1,955</b>	
<b>Hawaii</b> 1 person: <b>\$1,649</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$1,669</b> 2 people: <b>\$2,227</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$2,247</b>	
<b>Alaska</b> 1 person: <b>\$1,789</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$1,809</b> 2 people: <b>\$2,419</b> (+ \$20 disregard) = <b>\$2,439</b>	
	Individual: <b>\$4,000</b>  Couple: <b>\$6,000</b>

\*Program for individuals who lost their Medicare Part A benefits due to their return to work. They are eligible to purchase Medicare Part A benefits, have income of 200% FPL or less and resources that do not exceed twice the limit for SSI eligibility, and are not otherwise eligible for Medicaid. Medicaid pays the Medicare Part A premiums only.

\*\*These figures change yearly when new poverty figures are published in the spring of each year.

**VIEWPOINT**

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