

E-Government — MASC Promotes Internet Service

Recently, 94 percent of jurisdictions responding to a comprehensive survey of cities and counties by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) reported that they have an Internet web site or plan to create one within the next 12 months. A rapidly growing number of local governments are going a step further by providing on-line services and information to citizens electronically, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week including, but not limited to, online payment of utility bills, tickets, fines, and taxes, voter registration, record requests and complaint resolution.

In June, representatives from ten Upstate cities met at the ACOG offices to hear the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC) promote electronic governmental services in South Carolina. Miriam Hair, Deputy Executive Director of the MASC, presented the Association's effort to introduce South Carolina cities to a number of cost-effective computer products for conducting city business on-line. After researching the products of a number of companies, the Association has formed a strategic alliance with VC3, a Columbia-based Internet company, to enable municipal governments to sig-



nificantly enhance their web sites.

Jeff Polizzotto, Vice President of Sales for VC3, demonstrated the features of several of the company's e-government modules, including paying utility bills on-line and receiving and responding to citizen requests on-line. Miriam Hair stated the relationship between VC3 and MASC will offer South Carolina cities discounts off the list price of VC3 products as well as additional discounts as more and more cities purchase e-government modules. She also announced that the City of Aiken is serving as the pilot city for the citizen request module, and the City of North Augusta is serving as the pilot city for paying utility bills and property taxes on-line.

Miriam also introduced an extremely simple-to-use software program developed by the League of Minnesota

(e-Government continued on page 4)

Development Corporation News

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

Schenectady Materials and Processes Laboratory, Inc.'s request for a \$50,000 loan was approved for their new facility in Greenville. The lab specializes in materials testing and failure analysis for GE and other Upstate companies. ADC's funds will be used to purchase equipment and for working capital. The Greenville location will initially employ two people, expanding to six employees within two years.

Bright Water Digital, owned by Gary and Christiane Emory, is a new recording studio opening in Greenville. The studio will be state of the art and available to users who wish to record and produce quality music. The ADC funding of \$65,000 will combine with the Bank of Travelers Rest to purchase equipment. In addition to Gary and Christiane, four additional jobs will be created within two years.

The Booker Building Company is constructing a new medical office near Walhalla. Doctors Ted and Christina Booker will be establishing a medical practice in this office to be known as Golden Corner Family Practice. The ADC approved a loan of \$75,000 to be used for working capital and equipment. Community First Bank is providing primary financing for the project. The practice will initially employ the two doctors but expects to grow to

(ADC continued on page 2)

Medicaid Making Major Changes in Pharmaceutical Services on July 1

South Carolina Medicaid is making major changes July 1 in the \$400 million pharmaceutical programs serving its 700,000 recipients.

"These changes bring our program in line with the direction that insurers throughout South Carolina and the country are taking to cope with rising drug costs," said Bill Prince, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The changes follow two consecutive years in which pharmaceutical expenses have soared, increasing 23.5 percent this year and 28.4 percent last year.

Changes will emphasize generic substitutions for more costly brand names, require prior authorization for some products, and deny refills until 75 percent of the original prescription has been used.

The most apparent change limits the supply of each prescription to 34 days rather than the current 100-day limit. A four per month prescription limit for adults will be maintained. Federal law requires that children be provided all needed prescriptions.

"Even though we are limiting prescriptions to 34 days, pharmacists will be able to override the monthly prescription limit for essential, maintenance drugs used to treat a life-threatening illness," said Prince. "With this new prescription limit override ability that the pharmacists will have, if Medicaid patients have life-threatening illnesses, then they should be able to get the prescriptions they need."

Medicaid pharmaceutical costs from June through April total \$347.5 million, up 23.5 percent from last year. Besides drug ingredient price hikes, the 474,580 Medicaid recipients using pharmacy services was an 8.9 percent increase, and the 5 million prescriptions

purchased was up 10 percent from the previous time frame.

Medicaid recipients may call 1-888-549-0820 for more information or go to the DHHS web site at www.dhhs.state.sc.us

South Carolina Medicaid Pharmacy Program

Recipient Information. The following information for Medicaid recipients describes the South Carolina Medicaid pharmacy program and prescription benefit changes that will take place July 2001.

Supply of Medication. Medicaid pays for a maximum of 34-day supply of medication per prescription or refill.

Refills. At least 75 percent of the current prescription must be used (as directed on the prescription) before Medicaid pays for a refill of the prescription.

Generics. Medicaid pays for most generic products, so patients should ask their doctors to prescribe the generic drug. Generics have the same active ingredients as the brand name product and are identical to the brand name in quality, strength, and purity.

Medicaid does NOT pay for most brand name drugs if there are generics available.

Medicaid pays for some products only when prescribed for certain conditions, so a review process called "prior authorization" is necessary for some prescriptions.

Doctors and pharmacists have been sent information that describes prior authorization and the steps that must be taken for Medicaid to consider paying for the prescription. If the product is not approved for Medicaid payment during the review process, then Medicaid will not pay for the prescription. If the requested product is approved, then

Medicaid will pay for the prescription for a certain period of time.

Monthly Prescription Limit. Adults (age 21 and older) are allowed up to four Medicaid-covered prescriptions or refills per month. Doctors and pharmacists have been sent information that describes the steps that they must take for Medicaid to pay (only under certain conditions) for a prescription after the monthly prescription limit has been reached.

Children (birth to age 21) are allowed an unlimited number of Medicaid-covered prescriptions or refills per month.

Co-payment (No change). There is a \$2.00 co-payment per non-family planning prescription or refill for adults. If the non-family planning prescription or refill is for an adult (age 21 and older), then a \$2.00 co-payment per prescription or refill is owed to the pharmacy. No co-payment per prescription or refill for children or nursing home/waiver program patients. If the prescription or refill is for a child (birth to age 21) or nursing home/waiver program patient, then no co-

(ADC continued from page 1)

ten employees within two years. The Small Business Administration also notified the ADC that the application for an SBA 504 loan for Booker Building Company was approved in the amount of \$425,000. This loan will provide permanent funding of the medical facility.

The ADC was also notified by the SBA that the application for Hari-Om, LLC, was approved in the amount of \$465,000. Hari-Om owns the new Best Western Inn in Seneca, South Carolina. Seneca National Bank provided the primary funding for the project. The SBA funding will allow for the purchase of the furniture, fixtures, and equipment for the

Landrum Habitat Project Receives SCCDA Award of Excellence

The South Carolina Community Development Association (SCCDA) recently awarded the City of Landrum's Shamrock Park Habitat for Humanity Project the organization's first annual Award of Excellence. The Award of Excellence, selected by the members of SCCDA from among the nominations submitted, is awarded to the project that stands out among other community development efforts across the state.

The City of Landrum and Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity, with assistance from the Appalachian Council of Governments, worked together to provide building sites for twenty-two (22) new homes. Through a \$250,000 grant from the Department of Commerce, Division of Community Grant Programs, the City of Landrum was able to develop the subdivision on a 12-acre tract of land owned by Habitat. The purchase of the property had depleted the capital budget of Habitat, so the organization looked to the City for assistance. The City applied for and received the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and utilized grant funds to pay for engineering and construction of water, sewer, roads and drainage facilities for the site. The Appalachian Council of Governments assisted the City with the CDBG application and administered the project.

Several factors made this project unique in its approach to community development. The cooperative effort between the private sector and state and local government was critical to the success of the subdivision. No one party could have made the project work without involvement from all sectors. The amount of public funding to meet this crucial community development need was minimal given the benefit of the project. Essentially, a \$250,000 public investment will result in 22 new



homes for low income residents. In terms of delivery of affordable housing, the cost averages just over \$11,000 in public assistance per unit.

The Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity Chapter operates a resale store that provides approximately one-third of the budget for housing construction. The remaining funds for building supplies and professional labor come from the homebuyers, who finance the purchase of the units through a mortgage with Habitat, and private donations. Through the revenue generated from the resale store and private donations, Habitat is able to keep the cost of the housing affordable enough for the low income residents to purchase. The average purchase price of the units in Shamrock Park is \$35,000. Thermal Belt Habitat for Humanity, the City of Landrum and the State of South Carolina, through their cooperative efforts on this project, have made homeowner-

Did You Know?

Anderson County was named for General Robert Anderson, a hero of the Revolution. Anderson County was created in 1827 from parts of the Old Pendleton District. This county was the site of the first successful transmission of high-voltage electricity over a long distance.

Pedestrian Safety Road Show Held in Greenville County

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) held the state's first ever Pedestrian Safety Road Show on June 7, 2001, in Greenville. The SCDOT chose Greenville as the kickoff site for the new state program because of the county's high number of pedestrian-related accidents and deaths, and for the pedestrian-related efforts already underway by the city and county of Greenville. Over the last six years (1995-2000), the county had 572 pedestrian-related crashes, and of those crashes there were 52 deaths and 563 non-fatal injuries. Greenville County ranked second in the state for pedestrian deaths and third in the state for pedestrian injuries.

The mission of the day-long meeting was to generate an increased level of awareness regarding pedestrian safety and walkability in Greenville County, channel that awareness into a commitment to improve pedestrian safety and walkability in the county, and structure that commitment into a realistic plan of action that will lead to ongoing improvement in pedestrian safety and walkability in the county.

The SCDOT Executive Director Elizabeth Mabry, Federal Highways Administration Division Administrator Bob Lee and local community leaders greeted the participants. Next, updates from the City of Greenville's sidewalk replacement, traffic calming, and aggressive driving abatement programs and Greenville County's Safe Communities, Trauma Center, and Sheriff's Office pedestrian-related programs were given.

The highlight of the event was a presentation from Mr. Peter Lagerwey, a noted pedestrian expert, and current City of Seattle Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Director. Mr. Lagerwey's pre-

(Safety continued on page 4)

Craig Will Call on U. S. Justice Department to Focus More on Elder Abuse

Reports of senior citizen abuse across the country increased over 300 percent from 1986 through 2000. At a Special Committee on Aging hearing on the abuse of senior citizens, U. S. Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID), said he will call upon the U. S. Justice Department to focus more effort in assisting state and county officials in the prosecution of perpetrators.

"We hear a lot about child abuse in this country and it is terrible. But one of the untold stories is the abuse of our nation's senior citizens. This problem is much larger than I had originally imagined. As a result of today's hearing, I intend to meet with Attorney General John Ashcroft and ask him to take specific steps to address this growing problem," Craig said.

Sara Aravanis, Director of the National Center on Elder Abuse, told the committee that nationwide reports of elder abuse increased from 117,000 cases in 1986 to 470,000 cases last year - a 301 percent increase. Elder abuse can encompass not only physical abuse, but also sexual, psychological, and financial abuses, as well as neglect, self-neglect, abandonment, and abduction.

Joanne Hopper of Fruitland, Idaho, gave the statistics a human face. "At the age of 44, in 1981, I was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis." My world tipped upside down. She had to sell her ranch because of the crippling effects of the disease. She later gave a family member a power of attorney to act on her behalf. After being unable to speak with her son, she called a real estate agent, who informed her that both of her homes were in foreclosure. "Because of the power of attorney abuse, I no longer have money for groceries or anything else," Hopper said.

Paul Greenwood, Deputy District Attorney and head of San Diego's Elder

Abuse Prosecution Unit, also testified before the committee. He called elder abuse, "One of the most serious issues facing law enforcement and prosecutors in this country within the next five years."

Craig said that coordinating existing resources is the key to the problem. "We must use existing state and federal resources effectively to target elder abuse. For the most part, the necessary state laws are on the books. What we need to do now is make sure that law enforcement, prosecutors and others involved in the system are aware of the laws, have the necessary specialized training, and are working together to bring these cases to trial. This is what I intend to discuss with the Attorney

(e-Government continued from page 1)

Cities that can enable municipalities to create and regularly update their own web sites. For additional information on this program and the progress of the pilot cities, plan to attend MASC's 61st Annual Meeting at the Greenville Hyatt Regency on July 19-22. Demonstrations of these products will be available throughout the meeting with a general session devoted to the topic on Saturday morning, July 21.

Miriam Hair may be contacted by phone at 803-933-1204 or e-mail at mhair@masc.state.sc.us. Contact VC3 by calling Jeff Polizzotto at 803-261-3333, or visit on-line at <http://www.govhost.com>. For general information concerning e-government, contact Joe Newton or Mike Sell at ACOG.

ICMA's "Electronic Government Survey 2000" examined the ways in which local governments use the Internet to deliver interactive services and information to citizens. This report and comprehensive information concerning e-government is available on-

Census Finds More Older Americans Still Working

More senior citizens are working during what might have been their retirement years, as older Americans help fill a need for employees in low-skilled fields while also seeking cash for health care.

The number of Americans 65 and older working or seeking work increased 10 percent between March 1999 and March 2000 to 4.5 million, the Census Bureau said in a report being released.

There was a 22 percent increase in seniors in administrative support positions, including clerical jobs, and an 18 percent increase in sales jobs.

The figures are from a survey separate from the 2000 census. Data from the latest head count on older Americans will be released over the next year.

Other findings:

- 83 percent are non-Hispanic white
- Women account for 57 percent of those 65 and older, and 67 percent of those 85 and older.

Reprint of a June 1, 2001, article ap-

(Safety continued from page 3)

sentation described the components of walkable communities by providing examples of positive and negative approaches. Next, Mr. Lagerwey reviewed Greenville County's pedestrian issues and then asked the participants to identify problems and develop potential strategies to improve pedestrian safety and walkability in the county. A steering committee of volunteers was named and it will be the committee's main goal to develop and implement a comprehensive pedestrian safety plan for Greenville County that will lead to continued reduction in the number of pedestrian-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities in the county. For additional pedestrian crash

Census 2000 Results



The U. S. Census Bureau recently released population counts for the nation. The Upstate grew 15.4 percent to 1,028,656 residents between 1990 and 2000. Information continues to be released that demonstrates the region's tremendous growth during the past decade. Some of the new information released, both on county and municipal levels, include age breakdown figures, household size and type, and housing information.

Not only has the population of the region been growing, but it has also been aging. The median age for the region's population in 2000 was 35.8 years, an increase of over two years from the 1990 figure of 33.6 years. Currently, the median age ranges from 32.7 in Pickens County to 39.5 in Oconee County. The median age for the nation as a whole was 35.3 in 2000.

The housing market in the region has been experiencing substantial growth as well. The total number of housing units in the region grew by 82,010 units since 1990, to a total of 443,785 units in 2000. Owner-occupied housing rose 20.87 percent in the region from 335,098 units in 1990, to 402,024 units in 2000. Cherokee County gained the largest percentage of owner-occupied housing with a 24.54 percent increase from 1990 to 2000. Greenville County saw the greatest growth in total number of owner-occupied housing, up 26,678 units from 1990 for a total of 149,556 units in 2000.

For more information concerning Census 2000 results, please contact an Economic Information Analyst with the Information Services Department, or visit the U. S. Census Bureau's web site at www.census.gov.

Assistance Available for Youth

Since July 1, 2000, the Paxen Group has been providing a comprehensive Workforce Investment Act Youth program for the Pendleton District Workforce Investment Area. The Pendleton District Workforce Investment Board, at its last meeting, approved the continuation of this relationship through June 30, 2002. This program provides eligible in-school and out-of-school youth a broad range of services. The in-school program for youth 14-18 years old provides mini workshops on decision making, conflict resolution, and life skills during the school year, followed by a summer employment component. Comprehensive case management is provided throughout the program.

The out-of-school program for youth 16-21 years old offers an open-entry training cycle over a period of 12 months primarily for high school dropouts. This full-time training includes basic skills, GED preparation, employability skills, life skills, and job specific skills, resulting in placement into unsubsidized employment.

A key principle of the Workforce Investment Act is the streamlining of services including the co-location, coordination, and integration of activities, information and services. The Paxen Group has begun and will continue to establish linkages with organizations and agencies in the Anderson, Oconee and Pickens counties region to serve the needs of the youth in its

Web Site Opens New Port to South Carolina Government

For those of you who haven't already discovered it, there is a wealth of information and services available to you at MySCGov.com. Whether you're researching legislation or looking for an interesting place to go for the weekend, MySCGov.com can link you to what you're searching for. This web site offers a state employee phone directory, central supply catalog, and even a place to file your state income taxes!

In an effort to make state, local, and federal government more accessible, the Budget and Control Board's Office of Information Resources (OIR) has developed MySCGov.com, a web site that offers citizens of South Carolina a broad base of information related to news, government, education, business, health, public safety, environment and tourism.

According to Teresa Richardson of OIR, "MySCGov.com focuses upon some of the most important services affecting the citizens of our state. Through this web portal, citizens, businesses, and employees of state, county, and local governments can complete dozens of daily interactive transactions. Through MySCGov.com, South Carolinians are no more than three mouse clicks away from state and local government information and services. The citizen doesn't need to know which agency to call or which line to stand in. This topic-based, interactive portal provides access to over 50,000 pages of government services."

A user can accomplish many tasks from accessing South Carolina State Code of Laws to finding "Things to Do" in any given region of the state through

(Web site continued on page 6)

Revitalized Downtown Greenville Hosts MASC's 2001 Annual Meeting

Downtowns are making a comeback in South Carolina and across the country. In small communities as well as large metropolitan areas, the Central Business District is once again emerging as a destination for business and leisure activities. With a population of about 60,000 people, Greenville is a good example of a medium-sized city that has undergone a successful revitalization process. Because of its successes, the City is an ideal location for MASC's 61st Annual Meeting, which focuses on Restoration and Renewal: Revitalizing our Hometowns.

A visitor to downtown Greenville finds a successful blend of historic buildings and new design, large office structures and small retail shops, dense mixed-use development and open public spaces. Through the years, the City has partnered with businesses to create anchors throughout downtown. In the early 1980s, the Hyatt Regency – the host hotel for MASC's Annual Meeting – became the City's first luxury convention hotel. In the years to come, other partnerships helped develop the Peace Center for the Performing Arts, the West End Market, the Bi-Lo Center and most recently Court Square. MASC Annual Meeting guests will enjoy an opening celebration in Court Square with refreshments catered by the newly renovated Westin Poinsett, an elegant hotel first popularized in the 1920s.

MASC Annual Meeting attendees can discover first-hand what makes Greenville's downtown successful. Workshops that explore the downtown, including a self-directed walking tour and a search for lovable places, will be offered at the meeting.

Highlights of the MASC Annual Meeting include an opening Keynote Address by retired South Carolina Chief Justice Earnest A. Finney, Jr., and a motivational message by speaker Steve Simms, titled "Lighten Up and Succeed." South Carolina municipalities

that won this year's Achievement Awards will be recognized Saturday morning, July 21, and information about their award-winning programs will be on display.

Several off-site tours are planned and topics offered at this year's meeting include:

- Let's Talk Trash
- Municipal Employee Discipline: The Legal Way
- The Big Box Problem
- ABC's of Money Management
- Homegrown Geographic Information Systems
- Growth and Development = Potential Liability?
- The Charrette as a Community-Building Tool
- It's a Wonderful Day in the Neighborhood
- Improve Your Communications
- Stop the Traffic!
- Be a More Effective Leader

Complete information about MASC's 61st Annual Meeting is available on MASC's web site at www.masc.state.sc.us. Registration fee is \$125. Attendees may register for the meeting on site at the Hyatt Regency Greenville. Registration opens at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 19 and will be open daily until 3:30 p.m. Saturday, July 21. For more information, call Nancy Walborn, MASC Conference Manager, at 803.933.1205 or e-mail her

(Web site continued from page 5)

a link to the S. C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism site.

Information is laid out in various ways to make access easy. Links across the top of the page provide a "one-stop-shop" of information and services based on topics such as "education," "government," and "tourism." The "Online Services" portal provides a list of services for the user including citi-

zen services, business services, and government-to-government services.

The page features an extensive search engine that allows for effortless search capabilities across more than 50,000 web pages. The portal averages over 8,000 visitors and 276,000 hits per day. It's easy to get to the web site. You can access it from the DHHS Intranet site at either the top or bottom of the page by clicking on "MySCGov.com," or you can type in the web address www.mysc.gov when prompted. Ms. Richardson summarized, "By providing a gateway to government services and information, we hope to give the citizens an opportunity to conduct business transactions conveniently and efficiently – anytime, anywhere."

If you have any questions or comments about the web site, you can contact Teresa Richardson at 896-0281.

Reprint of an article by Cindy McInnis



Town Administrator Position Open

The Historic Town of Cowpens, population 2,279, \$1 million budget, 13 employees, is seeking a Town Administrator. The Administrator will manage municipal operations and report to a five-member Council. Cowpens is located in Upstate South Carolina, 10 minutes from downtown Spartanburg, 45 minutes from Greenville, and 45 minutes from Charlotte, N. C. Prefer MPA or related degree and experience in municipal government. Salary DOQ/EOE. Send resume and cover letter to Town Administrator, P. O. Box 605, Cowpens, S. C. 29330 by Friday, June 29, 5:00 p.m.

Calendar of Events

- July 7-11 N4A Training Conference, Crown Plaza Hotel, Boston, MA.
- July 12 Aging Component Directors Meeting, 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., COG Training Room.
- July 13 Summer School of Gerontology Planning Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Winthrop University.
- July 19 Conference on Aging Planning Meeting, 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Central Midlands COG.
- July 20 SC4A Meeting, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Caring Connections, Columbia.
- July 19 WIA Board Meeting, 12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m., Madren Center, Clemson University.

The COG Board of Directors will not meet in July.

VIEWPOINT

**Appalachian Council of Governments
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