

## Upstate Economic Struggle Continues

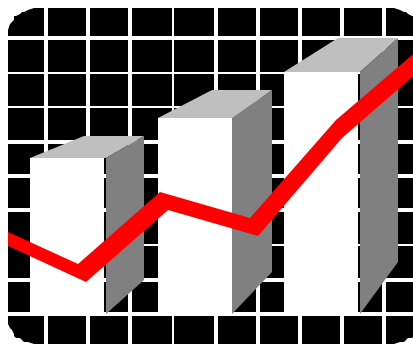
**T**he second quarter *Economic Activity Report of the SC Upstate* revealed a continued mix of activity throughout the region. Signs of economic recovery seemed evasive, as layoffs continued to make Upstate headlines. As we entered the third quarter, the state's unemployment rate rose to a nine-year high of 7 percent in July. The S. C. Employment Security Commission cited cuts in state government employment, an influx of job seekers into the market, and sluggish job creation as primary factors in this increase.

The July unemployment rate in our six-county region rose to 6.9 percent. Although somewhat lower than the state average, this rate was still higher than the 6.2 percent national average. A number of layoffs during the second quarter undoubtedly contributed to this July figure.

Although Mergon Group Ltd., an Irish plastics company, announced expansion plans that will result in the addition of 90 Anderson County jobs, Honeywell Nylons and BASF Corporation announced layoffs affecting 152 workers.

Although no major job-related announcements were made in Cherokee County, the S. C. Department of Transportation broke ground on the Highway 105 improvement project, which will include the construction of a new six-lane bridge over I-85.

Grammer Industries announced plans to expand its Greenville operation to add 95 new jobs. This announcement was overshadowed, however, by a number of job losses an-



nounced by Lockheed Martin, Dan River Plant and the Greenville County School District. In Greer, D & S Benore Trucking Company announced the layoff of 95 workers, while the Greenville Hospital System announced the pending construction of a nursing home that could eventually employ 200.

Two Oconee County temporary staffing agencies, Pinnacle Staffing and Randstad Services, announced workforce reductions totaling 114. Staff Masters, a temporary staffing agency in Pickens County, announced the layoff of 217 employees, while the closure of Alice Manufacturing's Arial Plant resulted in the displacement of 150 workers.

Extended Stay America celebrated the opening of its new downtown Spartanburg headquarters operation, which employs 235, while QS/1 Data Systems broke ground nearby on its new corporate headquarters office, which will employ 50.

The S. C. Appalachian COG Information Services Department publishes the *Economic Activity Report of the SC Upstate*. Sourced from various media releases, this quarterly publica-

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## Upstate Receives Five Community Investment Grants

**T**he S. C. Department of Commerce recently awarded Community Investment Grants from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program to five communities in the Upstate. The Grants Services staff of the Appalachian Council of Governments assisted all five recipients in developing the projects and submitting the applications and will administer the grants.

**Cherokee County** was awarded \$486,773 for the **Sims Road Water Project**. This project will extend public water service to the Sims Road neighborhood, which is suffering from contaminated and dried up wells. The project will serve 155 persons, 81 percent of whom are low income.

The **City of Easley** was awarded \$293,602 for the **Tiffany Woods Sewer Project**. This project will replace and upgrade malfunctioning sewer lines in the Tiffany Woods subdivision. Once the new system is completed, it will be owned and operated by Easley Combined Utilities. The project will alleviate a health hazard to 131 people, 92 percent of whom are low income.

The **City of Inman** has been awarded \$340,350 for the **Bobo Street Area Housing Rehabilitation Project**. This project will rehab 12 substandard housing units located on Bobo Street, Hollywood Street, and Bomar Street, benefiting 21 people, all of whom are low income.

The **City of Landrum** was awarded \$482,750 for the **South**

(Grants continued on page 4)

## S. C. Land Use Dispute Resolution Act Affect Local Planning

**T**he South Carolina Land Use Dispute Resolution Act, which was adopted by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor in June, will require changes to local government zoning and land use regulation ordinances. The law has two primary functions, to establish a mediation process for ordinance enforcement disputes, and to implement training and certification requirements for local planning boards and enforcement staff.

Prior to the adoption of this law, if a person or entity believed that a local zoning administrator made an error in applying the general provisions of a zoning ordinance and that the error caused harm, the person had the right to appeal that decision to a local board of zoning appeals. Likewise, if a person or entity believed that a local zoning administrator made an error in applying architectural review or design overlay provisions of a zoning ordinance, the aggrieved party had the right to appeal the decision to a local board of architectural review. In a similar manner, decisions of a local official with respect to the administration of land development ordinances could be appealed to the planning commission. In all three instances, if the person filing the appeal believed that the appeals board also reached a decision that was inconsistent with the ordinance, the person had the right to further appeal the matter to circuit court.

With the new law, the appeals provisions noted in the preceding paragraph remain in effect. However, after a decision is rendered by the appropriate appeals board, a person who believes a decision reached by the board is in error now has the option of filing for mediation at the same time an appeal is filed with the circuit court. The purpose of this step is to provide both the individual and the local government with a less formal, less costly, and quicker forum for settling disputes.

If mediation is sought, the appellant and a representative of the local



The S. C. Land Use Dispute Resolution Act provides mediation as an option for resolving disputes between local governments and property owners involving the enforcement of zoning and land use ordinances.

government meet with a state certified mediator. Their purpose is to attempt to come up with a solution that meets the requirements of the local government's ordinances but that also provides a satisfactory resolution for the appellant. If a solution is reached, it is submitted to the local city or county council and the circuit court for approval. If approved, the solution is recorded and applicable permits are issued. If a solution cannot be reached, or if a solution is rejected by either the local governing body or the court, then the appeal proceeds forward to circuit court, just as it would have prior to the enactment of this law.

It is important to note that the new law does not provide local administrative officials and councils with the authority to violate their ordinances. However, the variance tool, which allows a board of appeals to relax the rules of an ordinance for cases in which the strict application of regulations would result in an unreasonable hardship, remains in effect.

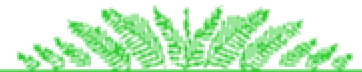
The second feature of this law is to establish educational and certification requirements for members of planning commissions, boards of zoning appeals, and boards of architectural review, as well as zoning administrators and their staffs. During the first year of appointment, six hours of classes will be required, with three additional hours per year thereafter. Individuals certified

by the American Institute of Certified Planners, with a masters or doctorate in planning, and lawyers are exempt from the educational requirements. There is a staggered schedule, based on the population of a jurisdiction, which determines the date by which local officials must comply with the training requirements.

- January 1, 2005, for jurisdictions with a population of greater than 70,000,
- January 1, 2006, for jurisdictions with a population between 35,000 and 70,000,
- January 1, 2007, for jurisdictions with a population of less than 35,000.

To help local governments in the region comply with education requirements, the Appalachian Council of Governments will review training criteria and implement educational programs for board members and staff within the region. We will also provide information on additional training opportunities provided by other groups.

While local governments have some time to come into compliance with the training and certification requirements, zoning and land development ordinances must be amended immediately to reflect the new law. ACOG planning staff is available to assist jurisdictions in developing the required amendments. For additional information or assistance, please contact Steve Pelissier.



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tion lists details for industrial and commercial projects that involve new construction, expansion, and renovation. Statistics on plant closings, layoffs, and hiring plans are also included. Please contact the Information Services Department at 242-9733 to purchase the publication for a single quarter or to order a yearly subscription.

## Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government — *Gaffney Mayor and Central Councilmember Graduate*



Center row, left to right, graduates David Donald of Central and Henry Jolly of Gaffney

Mayor Henry Jolly of the City of Gaffney and Councilmember David Donald of the Town of Central graduated from the Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government on July 11. Graduates received their diplomas during the Municipal Association of South Carolina's Annual Meeting in Myrtle Beach.

Established in 1986, the Institute gives municipal officials a better understanding of how local government operates. Mayor Jolly and Councilmember Donald attended two day-long sessions at the Municipal Association meeting and at least three evening satellite broadcasts held at the **Appalachian Council of Governments'** offices. Topics address the varied concerns of local government officials such as powers and duties of elected officials, finance and planning/zoning.

For more information about the Institute, please visit MASC's Website at [www.masc.sc](http://www.masc.sc), or call Mary Brantner at 803-933-1206.

## Development Corporation News

The Appalachian Development Corporation Board approved a loan to Vigilix, Inc., of Greenville in the amount of \$120,000 to be used for equipment and working capital. The business is owned by Heidi and Andrew Kurtz. Seven new jobs are to be created.

The Board approved a loan to Bernhardt House of Violins of Greenville in the amount of \$160,000 to be used for inventory and working capital. Business Development Corporation of Columbia is providing primary financing. The business, owned by Joyce Miller, will operate from a location in the West End of Greenville providing stringed instrument rentals, repair, and lessons. The project will create four new jobs.

A loan was approved to Act Southeast, Inc., of Easley in the amount of \$50,000 to be used to assist Derek Windsor to purchase the assets of the business from the retiring owner. The company welds saw blades for use in industrial metal saws. The project will create one new job and retain the existing three jobs.

A loan was approved to Superior Machine locating in Seneca in the amount of \$150,000. The funds are to be used for working capital and equipment in connection with other financing including an approved SBA 504 loan in the amount of \$505,000. Community First Bank of Walhalla will be providing primary funding. Superior Machine will provide metal machining services to their customer base in the Southeast. The company is owned by Bruce DeClark and will employ up to 20 people in the South Carolina plant.

A loan of \$50,000 was approved to Linda and Jim Graham in conjunction with the opening of their second Bruster's Ice Cream Company. The new site is on Highway 9 in Boiling Springs. Linda and Jim also have

an approved SBA 504 loan in the amount of \$242,800. National Bank of South Carolina is providing primary financing. The business will employ up to 15 people including full and part time.

A loan of \$74,000 was approved to Robert Bryson for use in the relocation of radio station WHPB to new property in Anderson County. WHPB is a local AM radio station that has been broadcasting from Belton, but needed to relocate when its lease expired. Palmetto Bank is to provide additional financing. Three new jobs and retention of the existing two jobs should occur.

A loan of \$100,000 to Palmetto Custom Films International, Inc., of Piedmont was closed and funded to allow Dave Wilson to expand the company's film slitting operation and allow for up to 10 additional jobs.

## Do You See You?

According to Webster's Dictionary: **Dignity** means "the quality or condition of being esteemed, honored or worthy; it is the respect and honor associated with an important position. **Respect** means "to feel or show deferential regard for; to avoid violation of or interference with." Each day the Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office receives phone calls from individuals whose loved ones are not being treated with dignity or respect. It is up to each of us to take notice and take charge to help those people in facilities to receive the dignity and respect that they have earned and DESERVE.

### Do You See You?

by Jamie A. Guay

Look at me... I'll be 93, soon....

I can only eat with help and with a spoon.

What a mess... I can't remember the last time I wore a nice dress.

I sit and stare, at a blank television screen...

Can anyone see me?

She was a doctor, he was a lawyer... as for me...

My memory "ain't what it used to be."

I do believe that I helped people in need, but now...

They help me.

No one ever told me "this" is what I have to look forward

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# VIEWPOINT

Appalachian Council of Governments  
P. O. Box 6668  
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## Dr. Garrison Honored For Outstanding Service



Board Chairman Doug Douglas (left) and Director Julia Sermons (right) are pictured presenting Dr. Garrison with the award.

During its July 17, 2003, Board meeting, the Pendleton District Workforce Investment Board recognized Dr. Don Garrison, Board member and former President of Tri-County Technical College, for Outstanding Service. Dr. Garrison was presented with a plaque for 20 years of Distinguished Leadership in Workforce Development for the Citizens of Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties.

Dr. Garrison was appointed to the Pendleton District Workforce Invest-

ment Board in 2000. He previously served on the Pendleton District Private Industry Council from 1983 until 1998 and the Pendleton District Workforce Development Board from 1998 until 2000, which were predecessors to the current Pendleton District Workforce Investment Board. This was Dr. Garrison's last Pendleton District Workforce Investment Board meeting representing Tri-County Technical College.

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**Church Avenue Housing Rehabilitation Project**, which will rehab 13 substandard houses, undertake repairs on 4 houses, demolish 2 dilapidated vacant units, and remove a condemned vacant mobile home. This project will benefit 41 people, all of whom are low income.

The **City of Pickens** has been awarded \$500,000 for the **Pickens Gardens Sewer Project**. This project will replace a malfunctioning pump station, located near Pickens Gardens Apartments, a low-income housing complex, with a gravity sewer line. All 149 beneficiaries are low income.

For more information on these projects or the CDBG program, contact a member of the ACOG Grants Services staff.

*(Look continued from page 3)*

to.

We are all thrown in a room... it looks like a zoo.

Helpless as can be.

Trust me, I would rather be on my own... than sitting here never knowing ~

Who will help me??

LOOK AT ME!

I had a husband and children... I was strong and independent!

And now... I hear them talking...

They think I can't hear what they say.

You should have heard them the other day!

Apparently, they don't think they will be in my seat.

They will be here or someone they know soon...

Being fed by a spoon,

Being shoved into bed,

Hearing all the hate that is said,

No activity,

Just a T.V.

See and feel my pain... I have nothing to gain.

Understand I am frustrated, too.

Look at me!!!

Do you see you??