



# RURAL DEVELOPMENTS

## SENATOR JOHN MATTHEWS ADDRESSES THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SC RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

STORY BY WALTER HARRIS

“Cathedral building” was the theme of Senator John Matthews’ keynote address to the SC Rural Development Council on November 5th near Moncks Corner.

Cathedral building in Europe in the middle ages was a long term enterprise. Typically, the designers who had the vision for the structure and how it would be constructed wouldn’t expect to be around to see the finished product. Likewise, the initial laborers who broke ground for the structure wouldn’t live long enough to see their initial efforts turn into a place of beauty, architectural significance, and spiritual consequence.

Senator Matthews compared this system of building great cathedrals with our current processes which emphasize current year budgeting, bi-annual elections

and the 24 hour news cycle. These forces encourage the pursuit of short term outcomes at the expense of long



term thinking and planning. “Cathedral Thinking” on the other hand requires long term planning and investments that are not likely to pay off in the current fiscal year and may not pay off in our lifetimes.

Sen. Matthews, a former educator, said that the best place to apply this Cathedral Thinking to improve rural South Carolina is in the education of our youth in rural South Carolina. Education is central to an individual’s chances of personal success. Likewise, a community’s success is determined by its citizens, its workforce and its leadership, all of which are directly impacted by the quality of the education system. An educated citizen chooses quality leaders, attracts quality employers, starts quality businesses, supports local infrastructure improvements and lives a better quality of life.

## ALLENDALE COUNTY ALIVE

STORY BY WALTER HARRIS

Allendale County Alive, a non-profit headed by Wilbur Cave, is doing what it can with its partners to improve the lives of folks living in Allendale County. Allendale County, by most any account, is one of the poorest counties in South Carolina. Unemployment is the highest rate in South Carolina at 22.5%.

Historically, Allendale’s economy was built on agriculture and tourism. At one time, US 301 was a major North/South Route for the nation. As a result of the traffic along highway 301, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism operated one of its few Welcome Centers in the county. Motels and restaurants lined the highway providing job opportunities

for local residents. The other mainstay of the local economy, agriculture, also went through a transition. The deployment of modern farming techniques required few farm workers even while increasing crop yields. Manufacturing is important to the county, but has not grown significantly in recent years.

The result has been chronic ...continued on page 2

SENATOR JOHN MATTHEWS ..... 1

ALLENDALE COUNTY ALIVE..... 1

NEW OFFICES ..... 2

VERNITA DORE ..... 3

INSIDE

PO BOX 23205  
COLUMBIA SC 29224-2305  
PHONE (803)699-3188  
FAX (803)736-4418



Allendale Alive...continued from page 1  
 unemployment and a steady loss of young people who leave the county for higher education, the military or simply to pursue opportunities in larger metropolitan areas.

During the 90's several initiatives were developed to address some of these issues. One of these was Allendale Alive. Allendale Alive was created to take advantage of the US Department of Agriculture-Rural Development's Enterprise Community



Wilbur Cave, Director Allendale County Alive Program. This program targeted high

poverty areas with direct funding from the US Government plus a pledge to give the designated communities preference for all other federal programs. Allendale Alive, under the leadership of Wilbur Cave, has taken advantage of several USDA-Rural Development programs.

One of the most interesting, and one that other SC communities can take advantage of, is the revolving loan program. USDA-Rural Development has two programs which can fund a revolving loan program, Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) and the Intermediary Relending Program (IRP). Allendale received an RBEG and uses it to make loans to small Allendale County businesses to finance growth that leads to job opportunities. When loans are repaid, they are relet within the Allendale County Community. Wilbur partners with the USC-Salkehatchie Leadership Institute which helps Allendale Alive with the program. Mr. Cave said that he wouldn't be able to move forward without the valuable assistance of Pat Ciez of the Leadership Institute.

So far Allendale Alive has made seven loans in a variety of businesses

such as landscaping, trucking, auto repair, journalism and groceries.



James J. Johnson, owner of JJ's and client of Allendale County Alive

While it has not always been smooth sailing for the organization or the county, Allendale Alive and the USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute are working together to make things happen in the county. Wilbur Cave can be reached at 803-584-3600. Ann Rice, head of the USC Salkehatchie Leadership Institute, can be reached at 803-584-3446 extension 190.

## THE CLEMSON INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MOVE INTO THEIR NEW OFFICES

STORY BY WALTER HARRIS

The Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development has moved into their new offices located on the Sandhill Research and Education Center off of Clemson Road in Columbia.

The new building will be LEED certified by the US Green Building Council. The building is built into a beautiful hillside

and faces one of the three lakes on the property. It is designed to conserve energy in both its operation and its construction.

Water is also conserved through its gray water system. This system recycles water from the sinks for use in toilets. The building was also designed with meeting space that is available for rent to compatible organizations.



## DAVID HUGHES AND VERNITA DORE ELECTED COUNCIL CO-CHAIRS

On November 6th, the SC Rural Development Council elected Dr David Hughes and Vernita Dore as the state and federal co-chairs of the Council. Dr Hughes is on the Clemson Faculty and is the Extension Leader for the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development. Ms Dore is the newly appointed state director of USDA-Rural Development. They will both serve one year terms.

# VERNITA DORE NAMED STATE DIRECTOR, USDA-RURAL DEVELOPMENT DEVELOPMENT

STORY BY USDA-RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Vernita F. Dore was appointed South Carolina State Director for USDA Rural Development by President Barack Obama in August 2009. A seasoned agency administrator, she is a passionate advocate on behalf of rural communities throughout the state. Ms. Dore has the vision to administer the valuable programs and services provided by USDA Rural Development that will enhance the agency's mission, "To increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans." Ms. Dore brings to USDA Rural Development a wealth of experience with more than two decades of experience working on behalf of rural Americans. Most recently, Ms. Dore served as Area Director for 10 large and demographically diverse counties in South Carolina's Lowcountry. In this capacity, she provided leadership, strategic direction, and supervision for all agency activities – managing a multimillion dollar budget. Ms. Dore understands South Carolina's rural communities, having also served as an Assistant County Supervisor, County Supervisor, Community Development Manager, and Rural Development Manager during her tenure.

Ms. Dore is an active community leader serving on the Beaufort-Jasper Higher Education Commission, the BNCC Society of Christian Women, South Carolina Women's Connection, and the Lowcountry Continuum of Care. She is also the Governing Council Officer for the Beaufort County Affordable Housing Council and

ex-officio member of the Low Country Regional Home Consortium. Additionally, Ms. Dore is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. A native of Beaufort, South Carolina, Ms. Dore earned a Bachelor of



Arts in Journalism from the University of South Carolina. She has received additional professional development from the USDA Graduate School, the University of South Carolina's Darla Moore School of Business and the Federal Executive Institute.

Ms. Dore, her husband Louis, and daughter Candace currently reside in Beaufort, South Carolina. Her eldest daughter, Angela, is a sophomore at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia.

# PETER ARNOTI STAYS FOR ONE MORE YEAR IN COLLETON

Peter Arnoti, probably the most experienced local economic developer in South Carolina, has decided to spend one more year in Colleton County. He still feels there is a lot left to be done.

According to press reports in the Press and Standard, Colleton County Administrator Dour Burns said that during the whole time the county has been preparing to seek a replacement to take over when Arnoti left in February he had been lobbying Arnoti to remain on the job. He finally relented.

Peter has economic development experience in a number of counties in South Carolina including McCormick, Marion, Greenwood and Colleton Counties.

He has been very successful on a number of fronts in Colleton County. He has worked to develop the Quick Job Center which should be completed by the end of this year and the spec building at the Colleton County Commerce Center. His other major accomplishment in Colleton County is the completion of the Colleton County Commerce Center which will attract new employers to the area for years to come.

## THE SC RURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

RURAL DEVELOPMENTS is a publication of the SC Rural Development Council and the SC Community Development Collaborative. It is designed to promote awareness of the issues confronting rural South Carolina. Rural Developments is supported by the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development and a grant from USDA-Rural Development.

The South Carolina Rural Development Council is a federally recognized organization made up of federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations and other organizations which have interests or responsibilities in rural areas.

The SC Community Development Collaborative is made up of organizations interested in effective community development practices in South Carolina. It is facilitated by Clemson's Institute for Economic and Community Development.

Editor:

Walter E. Harris

Telephone: (803) 6993188 E-Mail: [walterh@clemson.edu](mailto:walterh@clemson.edu)  
PO Box 23205, Columbia SC 29224-3205