

Title: "2016 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR" Carlton bridges Selected For First Annual  
 Author:  
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# "2016 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR"

## Carlton Bridges Selected For First Annual Award

**M**r. Carlton Bridges of Gaffney won many awards, was named today a Literacy Association tutor, among other things. He was named "Cherokee Volunteer of the Year" by The Cherokee Chronicle.

Mr. Bridges was nominated for the award by the CEO of the Cherokee County Family YMCA, Mike Goforth.

A panel of four judges with experience in non-profit work made the selection from a field of 21 nominations received.

The judges wrote, "Carlton Bridges not only volunteers live, work, and raise with the YMCA our families. We in various capacities, but has also been instrumental in leading the South Carolina Peach Festival, the local

Adopt-A-Highway program which has won this award, he is certainly deserving. He just does so much for so many. We appreciate The Cherokee Chronicle recognizing him and the other nominees who give of their time to help our agency and so many others."

Mr. Bridges will be presented a special plaque and will win a prize package which includes a gift certificate to Buford Street Ace Hardware.

This will become an annual award by The Cherokee Chronicle.

**THE  
 NOMINATION  
 BIO:**

Cherokee County

Family YMCA:

Education –

Spartanburg Community College – Automotive / Diesel Technology - 1980 to 1981

Result – South East Region Automotive Supervisor UPS Freight – 33 years 6 months perfect attendance Ashworth College – Fitness – Nutrition – 1994 to 1995

Writes a weekly column for the Gaffney Ledger.

Community Involvement –

- Election Commissioner – Secretary for the Cherokee County Election and Voter Registration Board. Appointed by Gov. Nikki Haley – (2014 to current)

- Tax Com-



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missioner – (Appointed by the County Council) Vice President for the Cherokee County / Grassy Pond Volunteer Fire Dept. Tax Commission – 2005 to current

• **P a l m e t t o** Pride / Cherokee County Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator. Because of Carlton's leadership Cherokee County is the most decorated program in South Carolina Adopt-A-Highway history. Carlton has served as Coordinator since 1997 to current.

• **C h e r o k e e** County Literacy Association – Vice-Chairman / Certified Laubach Reading and Writing Tutor. – 2008 to current

• **S o u t h C a r o l i n a** Peach Festival – First person of color to be CEO and Board Chairman of the Festival in its 36-year history. Created the South Carolina Peach Festival Hall Of Fame. First person of color to be inducted into the South Carolina Peach Festival Hall Of Fame. – 1999 to current.

• **J e f f e r s o n** Award – Created by First Lady Jackie Kennedy Onasis for Outstanding Community Service. – 1994

• **J o h n C. M a x w e l l** Leadership Award – In 2014 was selected by the John C. Maxwell Team as one of the Top 100 Community Leaders in the

country.

• **P r o f e s s i o n a l** Arm-wrestler – Former Champion in four states, 3rd in the nation.

• **C u r r e n t** USAA National Pro-Am Arm-wrestling Champion

• **S t a t e L e v e l** Chess Player.

**Y M C A**

• **L o n g t e r m** member of the Cherokee County Family YMCA.

• **S e r v e d** on the Board since 2011.

• **S e r v e d** as Chairman of the Board since 2013.

• **I m p l e m e n t e d** a literacy program at the Y including regular visits from the Cherokee County book mobile.

• **T a k i n g** leadership role to review and develop more detailed by-laws and policies.

Carlton has been instrumental in moving the YMCA forward as Board Chair. He created the Cherokee County Family YMCA Community Service Scholarship recently approved by the Board that will be awarded to a High School graduate.

I highly recommend him for this award because of his long term service to our community and his support of the YMCA. He has and continues to be a valuable asset to our YMCA as a member, board member, board chair, and his leadership and forward thinking.

**MIKE**

**G O F O R T H , C E O**  
**C H E R O K E E**  
**F A M I L Y Y M C A**

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**Winner Carlton Bridges, left, with YMCA CEO Mike Goforth**

Title: **Legislators give insight into upcoming session**  
 Author: BY TOM O'DARE TOM.ODARE@MYHORRYNEWS.COM  
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# Legislators give insight into upcoming session

BY TOM O'DARE

TOM.ODARE@MYHORRYNEWS.COM

There were a couple of things very obvious Tuesday afternoon at the 2016 Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Legislative Luncheon.

One, every legislator present favors a gas tax as a funding source for road and bridge repairs in South Carolina.

And two, S.C. Sen. Luke Rankin is Gov. Nikki Haley's biggest cheerleader in her quest to be the next ambassador to the United Nations.

Three senators -- Rankin, Ronnie Sabb and Stephen Goldfinch -- and five state representatives -- Alan Clemmons, Greg Duckworth, Jeff Johnson, Russell Fry and Lee Hewitt -- told the huge crowd gathered at the Horry Georgetown Technical College's Conference Center their visions for

the upcoming legislative session beginning in January.

The entire panel listed roads as a top priority and all agreed that a gas tax is necessary to

provide the money for the road improvements.

Clemmons said a gas tax is needed to provide a long-lasting sustainable funding source for roads and bridges.

Johnson said he agreed with Clemmons, but he wanted to see a tax credit for South Carolina residents tied to the new tax.

Saying it is time to switch the responsibility for paying for new roads, Goldfinch said tourists should pay the biggest portion of road funding, not teachers or firefighters.

Rankin said South Carolina

is the laughing stock in the Southeast when it comes to paying for roads.

As to implementing a gas tax to pay for it, "We'd be stupid if we didn't," he said.

Goldfinch said he is looking forward to passing some new rules changes in the Senate that should get legislation through a lot faster.

Rankin said what he is looking forward to the most in January is Gov. Nikki Haley

becoming the UN ambassador.

During Rankin's recent re-election bid, Haley worked hard for his opponent and Rankin made it clear he still isn't happy with that move.

"A new Governor will change the Columbia atmosphere dramatically," he said. "It will help

advance legislation in the General Assembly."

Duckworth pointed to the need for legislators to be more decisive this session because the General Assembly won't meet as long as it has in the past.

He said the session will be cut short by almost four weeks this time.

Johnson said he will work to alleviate flooding problems that local areas have had the past two years.

Fry said he spent long hours this summer studying ways to battle the heroin and opiate epidemics that have ravaged the state.

"We need to tweak our laws in this area to fight this growing problem," he said.



Title: **This week's question:**

Author:

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## ON THE STREET

### This week's question:

**What do you think about Donald Trump choosing Gov. Nikki Haley to be ambassador to the United Nations?**

*Let us know what you think about this issue by going to our website: [www.myhorrynews.com](http://www.myhorrynews.com)*

#### Sam Frink

I think she has done a good job as Governor, and we're prepared to operate with McMaster in charge. I think he has enough experience to serve as Governor, and he probably had to train her a little bit. I'm just thankful Trump is diversifying his cabinet.

#### Harold Phillips

I think it's good for South Carolina. It's also a good opportunity for her to advance in her political career. I think Secretary of State would have been good for her. It's good visibility for South Carolina.

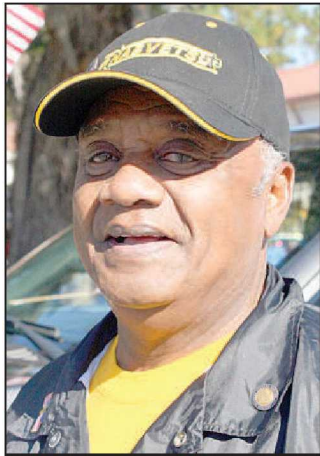
#### Michael Lynch

Good for her. I think she will do a good job. I think

it's good to see a South Carolinian get a position that is international.

#### Mitch Locklear

I think it's more important for her to be Governor of South Carolina. I think she does a good job as Governor and is more qualified to be Governor.



Title: **SOUND OFF!**  
Author:  
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# SOUND OFF!

President-elect Donald Trump recently selected Nikki Haley, governor of South Carolina, as the United States ambassador to the United Nations. Critics of the selection say Gov. Haley has little experience in foreign policy. Do you think she is a good choice for this position? Choices are:

1. Yes
2. No
3. Undecided

Send your comments on this subject to:  
[steve.robertson@myhorrynews.com](mailto:steve.robertson@myhorrynews.com)

Poll results will be reported in next week's edition of the *Horry Independent*.

To vote, log on to [www.myhorrynews.com](http://www.myhorrynews.com) and go to the *Opinion menu*.



Title: **Some are happy to see Haley get post**

Author:

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# Some are happy to see Haley get post

It's always interesting to listen to our state legislators in the month or so leading up to a new General Assembly session in Columbia.

If you believe everything that you hear, all the problems in South Carolina are finally going to be addressed and cleared up this time. And I'm sure that's the mantra that's being spread by delegations throughout the state.

But then January comes around and something happens.

The big issues get debated to death and everybody wants their version of the quick fix or nothing. Then hundreds if not thousands of other local, self-serving laws and regulations are passed leaving the big issues in the dust.

And this year, our men and women in the State House will have even less time to get things accomplished because the session that used to run until mid-June is being cut back until mid-May.

Tuesday, a good portion of the Horry and Georgetown delegation attended the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce's annual Legislative Luncheon to give their insights and desires for the upcoming session.



| A DIFFERENT |  
DRUM

TOM  
O'DARE

got lots of money poured in to the other side, trying to get Rankin out

of the Senate.

She did the same thing in a number of races throughout the state, hoping to stack the legislature in her favor. But in most cases, her efforts were in vain.

So Tuesday, Rankin took great delight in saying the one thing he looks forward to the most in January is having a different governor in the Capitol.

For those not keeping up with the latest national news, President-elect Trump has tabbed Haley to be the next ambassador to the United Nations.

Rankin said that maybe things will get done more efficiently without a constant threat of the governor's veto looming over the building.

And one of those items that faced the veto pen last year was a proposal for a gas tax increase in the state to pay for road and bridge repairs and construction.

To a person Tuesday, each legislator told the huge Chamber crowd that they expect some kind of gas tax to be imposed in order to get a sustainable funding source for our roads.

South Carolina has one of the lowest gas taxes in the nation already so upping it a bit really won't do that much harm. Just go across the border into North Carolina and the gas price goes up by 20 cents or more because of their higher gas tax.

And oh yeah, their roads are in much better shape than ours. So, South Carolina folks need to decide what they want—lower prices at the pump or terrible roads that cause damage to our vehicles that still cost us.

I did think it was interesting how times have changed. Except for one panelist, Sen. Ronnie Sabb, everyone on the stage was a Republican.

Republicans advocating a tax hike—who'd have thunk it.

Some other issues did come across the table Tuesday besides roads and a gas tax.

Rankin said he hopes to find a constant state funding source for beach renourishment--and that's a good thing.

Just take a look at our beaches after ol' Matthew came threw in October and you can see why. Right now, local entities have to rely on the federal government for most renourishment money and that's not ever a sure thing.

Tourism drives our state's economy and the biggest tourism attraction we have is our beach.

Unfortunately, legislators in other parts of the state see renourishment funding as throwing money into the ocean.

Another subject that should be coming up this spring is dealing with mopeds.

State Sen. Greg Hembree who couldn't be there Tuesday has taken this issue as one of his most important topics. Others mentioned it and said they hope something can get done this time to regulate these two-wheeled menaces.

Now I know, a moped might be the only mode of transportation some folks can afford. But it always boggles my mind that nobody wants to do anything to regulate them.

They don't have to be insured; don't need a special license; and they don't go fast enough for main roads.

Hardly a week goes by without a story about a moped-vehicle collision. In fact, as I'm writing this, I just got a news alert about a moped driving being killed in nearby Marion County.

Last year, the legislature wanted to at least require that riders wear protective clothing so they could be seen by other drivers. But the governor vetoed even that.

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It makes no sense to let these vehicles go unabated and unlicensed and uninsured.

And you have to wonder why there is a resistance to such a common sense topic.

Like everything else, follow the money.

Not all, but many of the people driving these have lost their licenses to drive regular vehicles, often times for DUI offenses. And that's makes them an insurance company nightmare if the legislature starts requiring moped drivers to be insured.

And guess what industry wields quite a bit of power when it comes to influencing elected officials? I'll leave that up to others to figure out. But it's not hard to do so.

Maybe this issue and others will see the light of day before mid-May with a new occupant in the governor's mansion.

A governor who will work with the legislature instead of threatening it will be a breath of fresh air, especially if important legislation finally gets passed.

So to echo Sen. Rankin's heart-felt sentiments, good luck in New York Mrs. Haley.



Title: **Time to start thinking deeply about states 2018 leadership**  
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# Time to start thinking deeply about state's 2018 leadership

**N**ews that President-elect Donald Trump is considering S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley and Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster for prominent roles in his administration highlights how we need to start thinking now about who we want to lead South Carolina in the future.

With the 2016 elections over, Haley is considered a lame duck as her second term as governor ends in two years. Because she is a rising minority star in the Republican Party, it's natural that Trump's team would look for a big role for Haley, who met Thursday with Trump for what was called "a good discussion," by a spokesman. "She is very encouraged about the coming administration and the new direction it will bring to Washington."

But is Haley a real possibility to be the nation's secretary of state when people like former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani and 2012 GOP nominee Mitt Romney also are said to be in the running? Probably not, as Haley wasn't a big supporter of Trump's throughout the long campaign – and even criticized him at times. Add to that her lack of foreign policy experience and it's unlikely that she'll make the final cut. But then again, we didn't think Trump would win, so what do we know?

Whenever a new administration assembles its cabinet, there are dozens of party operatives from across the country who are put on lists to fill various slots. By last count, more than 50 people are listed as possibili-

ties to head 10 of the nation's 15 federal cabinet posts. This is done for purely political reasons – to create big headlines in loyal states to make voters feel good, create positive local headlines and boost the profile of leading members of the victorious party.

While Haley's name being circulated for a national role may be surprising to some, talk of McMaster being considered to be the nation's attorney general has a lot more potential – even though Giuliani has been mentioned for that role too. McMaster, a former state attorney general and longtime party insider, was one of the first national leaders to endorse Trump and has been firmly in his camp since January after U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., dropped out of the presidential race.

Last week, McMaster, who gave an introductory speech for Trump at the GOP presidential convention, told *Statehouse Report* that he felt Trump was special early on when he attracted thousands of people at rallies. "I knew this was going to be a really tough contest, and that not only was Trump the best candidate, he was the only candidate that could win the tough challengers," including beating Hillary Clinton, he said.

If asked to serve in the Trump administration, McMaster will have a tough choice himself. His standing as a leading candidate for governor has gone up exponentially because of his relationship with Trump. But if he heads to Washington, he won't have the

time to run for governor, leaving his longtime dream to be governor to other candidates.

If he leaves, then there would be a struggle in the state Senate because the president pro tempore ascends to become lieutenant governor. But just as Sen. John Courson of Columbia resigned as president pro tempore a few years back so he wouldn't have to be lieutenant governor, so would the current pro tem, Sen. Hugh Leatherman, often considered the state's most powerful politician because of his role as head of the Senate Finance Committee.

And if Haley and McMaster headed to Washington before 2018, the question of who would become governor would get even more complex.

It's fairly obvious the national GOP wants a major role for the ambitious Haley at some point. Could it come as a result of another possibility if newly elected U.S. Sen. Tim Scott teams in 2018 with U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy of the Upstate to run for governor and lieutenant governor? Scott, you might remember, became a senator after being appointed by Haley. If he won, would he return the favor and appoint her to fill his seat?

The political possibilities seem almost endless, which makes it even more important for the state to think now about its future political leaders.

Andy Brack is editor and publisher of *Statehouse Report*. He can be reached at [brack@statehousereport.com](mailto:brack@statehousereport.com).

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***Andy*Brack**  
The Statehouse Report

Title: **Disasters cloud farmers' futures**  
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# Disasters cloud farmers' futures

BY AUDREY HUDSON  
 The Sun News of Myrtle Beach

AYNOR — The Double R Farm has produced abundant crops for four generations of Rabon family farmers here, and despite the double whammy of record rains during the October harvest last year and last month's hurricane, they are determined to weather the hardship.

"I'll do whatever I gotta do, even if it means I'm worn out and broke," says Ronald Rabon. "But if I make it this year, it will take a miracle from the Lord."

Tropical storm-force winds and 12 inches of rain from Hurricane Matthew battered 700 acres of his cotton just as the bolls began to open, resulting in hardlock that made picking nearly impossible.

## Farms

From Page 1A  
 said.

Although the final damage assessment has not been tallied, Hardee said it appears that the hurricane will not exceed last year's drought and record flood destruction of crops.

"It's not doom and gloom, not the devastation we saw last year, but it was bad for a lot of folks, worse for some others," Hardee said.

Out of 600 acres of cotton planted last year, the Rabons salvaged 200 acres that amounted to less than 350 bales.

"Now I'm telling you, it's been tough," said the patriarch of the family, 86-year-old Dock Rabon.

Gov. Nikki Haley vetoed \$40 million in farm aid this spring, calling it an industry bailout, prompting a backlash from farmers and lawmakers who voted to overturn her decision.

That funding eventually paid about

They were able to salvage about 100 acres, mostly from farm lands tucked among wooded areas protected from the wind. Instead of 1,400 bales of cotton this year, the Rabons will likely end up with about 450 bales.

"I've lost more money than I made in two years," Rabon said.

The Rabons and farmers across the state were hit by a drought last year, and after months of praying for rain, the heavens opened in early October and dropped about 14 inches in 24 hours. Farmers in Horry County racked up \$9 million in damages, while statewide the amount topped \$530 million.

William Hardee III, Clemson

University's area agronomy agent for Horry County, said farmers were on the path for a perfect crop this year, until Matthew hit.

Cotton was hit; soybeans and peanut crops were also severely damaged, Hardee said.

"We needed a perfect year to make up for last year, but this took our chance away," Hardee

See **FARMS**, Page 3A

*"We needed a perfect year to make up for last year, but this took our chance away."*

**William Hardee III,**  
 Clemson University extension agent

25 percent of Rabon's losses, and he was forced to refinance the 1,200 acre farm.

"I expected to make it up this year, but the cotton hit the dirt. And what didn't fall, hardlocked. It ain't looking good," Rabon said.

Nearly 800 farmers in Horry County have applied for assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture because of damage caused by Hurricane Matthew.

However, direct payments for damaged crops were eliminated in the 2014 Farm Bill, so aid is limited to emergency conservation problems, property damage, debris removal, leveling land or repairing fences for livestock.

State agriculture officials are still assessing the recent damage and officials are mum on whether any financial assistance will be forthcoming.

"Two years in a row is rough," says Jared Martin, who estimates he lost half of his 300-acre peanut crops due to Hurricane Matthew.

"We've got to have some help, I can't handle no more," said Martin. "Insurance don't pay nothing, and our government just ain't helping."

Martin and his father at the D and J Farm managed to pay their bills last year, with only \$2,000 left to split between them. This year, Martin says he will break even.

"I'm working all year for nothing," Martin said.

Rabon and Martin are uncertain about their future in farming, and Martin isn't willing to commit to planting crops next year.

"All I know is farming, but I guess I could go to Walmart and shake some hands," Rabon said.



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Rabon has already reached out to state and federal lawmakers to let them know the severity of the damage, but he's counting on private re-financing to pull him through to farm another year.

"In all the years I've farmed, I've never had to call my congressperson or governor for help, we've always made

a living," Rabon said.

Rabon says he's not looking for a free handout, but unless the Farm Bill is amended, he says farmers won't be able to survive severe natural disasters, like the back-to-back harvest storms.

"When I'm dead, it's over," Rabon said. "My kids can't make a living farming, and I don't blame them. They

watched me go broke and wore out."

And when that happens, he asked, "Who will feed this country?"

***"My kids can't make a living farming, and I don't blame them. They watched me go broke and wore out."***

**Ronald Rabon,**  
South Carolina farmer

Title: **#TeamLaurens**  
 Author: By Vic MacDonald Editor  
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# #TeamLaurens

## Reynolds: Sheriff transition starts

By Vic MacDonald

Editor

The new sheriff in town, Don Reynolds, says he is transitioning from #TeamReynolds during the campaign to #TeamLaurens in his transition to office.

On Nov. 8, Reynolds won the position of Laurens County Sheriff, 14,047 to 11,096, over petition candidate Stephane Williams. Reynolds was the Republican nominee, and Williams was strongly backed by incumbent Ricky Chastain, beaten by Reynolds in the Republican primary.

"Now that the dust has settled from a very long and hard campaign season," Reynolds said, "it is time for us to move forward. As I stated after the primary, the only team now is #TeamLaurens. We have much work to do, but we are up to the

challenge."

A retired SC Highway Patrol officer, Reynolds must assemble a law enforcement team to transition into office in January, 2017. He has said Jarvis Reeder, with the Greenwood County Sheriff's Office, will become his Chief Deputy. The LCSO operates not only road deputies and investigators, but guards for the Johnson Detention Center, as well.

Reynolds won with 55.64% of the votes cast on Nov. 8. Laurens County had a 67.79% voter turnout in the presidential election year. For Republicans, 5,879 cast straight party ballots.

On the Democratic side, 3,772 cast straight party ballots. As a petition candidate, Williams received none of

these voters - his ballots had to come from voters who "split their ticket" - and in his case, more than 11,000 of those ballots came his way. There were 103 write-ins for sheriff.

In the election for President of the United States, Laurens County sided with the winner, New York billionaire Donald Trump. On Thursday, Trump visited the White House to begin the transition process with the staff of President Barack Obama.

Laurens County cast 16,770 votes for Trump, who carried South Carolina and won the election with 290 Electoral College votes. The race was decided about 2:30 a.m. Nov. 9

### Voting, 12A

## Voting

### From 1A

when Trump won Wisconsin.

His opponent, Democratic former U.S. Senator and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton won just over 230,000 more ballots in the nationwide popular vote (59.93 million), but did not reach the required 270 in the electoral votes. She got 232.

She is the fifth candidate in U.S. history to win the popular vote but not win the presidency. The last time it happened was 2000 - Al Gore lost to Republi-

can George W. Bush.

Clinton received 8,845 votes in Laurens County, and 373 votes went to Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson.

South Carolina was among "The Solid South," including North Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee won by Trump. In the GOP primary, he was not endorsed by SC Gov. Nikki Haley or US Sen. Lindsey Graham, but Trump was endorsed by SC Lt. Gov. Henry McMaster, a former state Attorney General.

Statewide, SC gave its 9 electoral votes to Trump,

1,143,611 to 849,469, over Clinton for a winning margin of about 15%.

U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, a Republican, won a full term to the Senate, the first African-American to do so since the Reconstruction era following the Civil War. Repub-



Rep. Willis

licans gave Scott 17,002 votes in Laurens County.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Duncan, of Laurens County, won re-election districtwide over challenger Hosea Cleveland, and garnered 17,909 in his home county (70%).

S.C. Rep. Mark Willis won re-election districtwide in District 14 (Greenville and Laurens counties), and won 5,446 votes in Laurens County. The Republican defeated Democrat Brandon Greene for re-election.

S.C. Rep. Mike Anthony won re-election districtwide in



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District 42 (Union and Laurens counties) and won 1,169 votes in Laurens County. His challenger, Republican Tommy

Mann, won 1,853 votes in Laurens County, but could not overtake Anthony in his home base, Union County.

In the Laurens County Coroner's race, incumbent Democrat Nick Nichols



**Rep. Anthony**

defeated Republican challenger William Weir, 13,705 to 12,002.

Weir was a late entry into the November General Election, as Nichols filed a lawsuit against GOP challenger James Hayes and was successful in court in getting Hayes' name removed from the ballot. A judge decided Hayes did not complete the proper coursework to run for a coroner's position in South Carolina.

In the only contested Laurens County Council race, Chairman Joe Wood overwhelmed his petition opponent, Kaaren Mann, by 85% to 14.7%. Wood received 3,277

votes in his council district (Seat 2, Ware Shoals).

In the only contested school board race, incumbent Terri Martin defeated Charles Downey, 985 to 679, in the District 55, Seat 1 contest.

All other candidates ran unopposed.

They are: SC Senator Danny Verdin, SC Rep. Mike Pitts, So-



**Nichols**

licitor David Stumbo, Clerk of Court Lynn Lancaster, Auditor Jim Coleman, County Council 3 Garrett McDaniel, Council 6 Diane Byrd Anderson, Council 7 Dr. David Pitts, Greenville Schools 27 Crystal Ball O'Connor, District 55 3 Barbara Beeks, District 55 5 Anthony Carpenter, District 55 7 Robby Bell, District 56 1 Edna McGee, District 56 2 Kimberly Williams-Carter, District 56 3 James David Barton, and District 56 4 Dr. Patsy Sadler.

Laurens County voted 26,788 ballots out of 39,516 registered voters.

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**Displaced, then returning.** Laurens County Council Chairman Joe Wood, right, and Council Vice-Chairman Keith Tollison look at vote totals last Tuesday in the council chambers of the historic courthouse in downtown Laurens. Council moved its Nov. 8 meeting from this room to Hillcrest Square to accommodate media and others watching a Smartboard and paper tallies of the General Election ballots. - Photo by Vic MacDonald