

From: SC News from SCIWAY <sciway-news@sc-news.net>
To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
Date: 3/9/2017 12:31:09 PM
Subject: Urgent: Can you help save the South Carolina Picture Project?

[[Read in Your Browser](#)]

Please Help Save Us the SC Picture Project:

[\\$7,865 Down, \\$11,783 to Go ...](#)

Dear friends and fellow South Carolinians,

In just a few short weeks, **SCIWAY will turn 21, which means we are now old enough good stiff drink!**

As it turns out, we may need one. Over the past two decades, we've grown from a simple portal with links to 23 other South Carolina websites – all that existed at the time – into a growing collection of original maps, detailed essays, and useful guides to state and local resources, including such things as [SC events](#), [SC elections](#), [SC pronunciations](#), and – especially important this time of year – [SC taxes](#).

(Tara, Robin & Kerri with Photographer [Bill Segars](#) | 2016 SC Historic Preservation Conference)

One of the things we're most proud of is a digital repository that documents important places and landscapes across our state. **Called the [South Carolina Picture Project](#), it now consists of 2,350 articles and 7,200 photos and paintings.** These images are contributed by talented professional and amateur artists, primarily from South Carolina but also from around the globe.

The SC Picture Project has grown exponentially since its inception in 2007. In 2007, a two-person team at SCIWAY – that's [Kerri Fitts](#) and [me](#) – were no longer able to keep up

In the summer of 2013, we hired an editor to fully develop this section of SCIWAY. [Tara](#)

has been working with us ever since, and [Brandon Coffey](#) joined as our resident photo and social media liaison a little over 15 months ago. Since that time, he has built a [devoted and engaged Facebook following](#). Tara's research and writing, meanwhile, is **enjoyed by over 1,200,000 people each day – that's 1,200,000 unique visitors a year!**

These skills require money, however. **The SC Picture Project earns no income but roughly \$45,000-\$55,000 a year to build and maintain.** (See [the breakdown here](#).) L. Rod Welch, who created SCIWAY, has personally supported the project as a gift to the state of South Carolina. However, the time has come when we must become financially independent in order to continue.

All this is to say, we need your help! Rod has placed the SC Picture Project in a 99-year trust so that it can remain online, as is, for decades to come. That said, in order to continue documenting the state's culture and history – adding new images and articles – we need to become self-sufficient. **Our two immediate goals over the next six months are to obtain 501(c)(3) status and then work to secure sponsorships and/or grants.**



(Tara & Robin with Photographer [Ralph Mayer](#) | Folly Beach)

We are especially interested in sponsorships because we believe **we'd be an excellent fit and platform for a South Carolina organization or corporation** that shares our goals and goals are:

- (1) To create resources that are **informative, beautiful, and freely accessible**
- (2) To serve as an **educational tool for South Carolina students** of all ages
- (3) To function as an **economic development tool for our state** by promoting both in-state and out-of state tourism
- (4) To **instill pride in South Carolina citizens** and to remind them, daily, that we have a rich heritage which we can be proud of

In the meantime, our goal is to stay afloat long enough to take both of the important steps. Because our loss of funding was unexpected, we've [organized a crowd-funding campaign](#) for emergency funding. **We are over the moon that more than 100 loyal donors believe in us enough to have contributed \$7,865 already!**

If we are able to raise the full \$19,648 in the next three weeks – by March 31, 2017 – we will be able to survive another six months. Although we have a long road ahead of us, the money we are trying to raise right now will allow us the time we need to begin our journey.

Please help us by making a contribution to our [emergency funding campaign](#). **As a**

saying thanks, we would love to send you a signed print by one of our photographers for any donation of \$65 or more. The selections are shown below, and you can [click here](#) to make your choice. (Please include your mailing address and preferred photo in a comment. If you prefer to write a check instead, please send it to "SC Picture Project" at 1183 Stone Post Road, James Island, SC 29412.)

Secondly and perhaps even more importantly, **if you have any contacts you can introduce to, or if you are part of a company, college, or organization that would like to participate in the SC Picture Project, please let us know.** We have a lot to offer a sponsor, and we'd love to share our story.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I appreciate it more than you'll ever know.

— [Robin Welch](#), James Island

Art for a Cause: Contribute for a Signed SC Print ...

The following photos have been generously donated by our photographers to help support the South Carolina Picture Project. [Signed prints will be sent to everyone who gives \\$65 or more.](#)

Myrtle Beach | Steve Rich

Cape Romain | Bill

Lake Murray | Ralph Mayer

Aiken Training Track | Lari

Lake Moultrie | Brandon Coffey

Shem Creek | Pam

Gervais Street Bridge | Benton Henry

Furman Belltower | T

College of Charleston | Kathie Lee

Old Sheldon Ruins |

Lake Jocassee | Mark VanDyke

Table Rock | Steve

Poinsett Bridge | James Salters

Magnolia Gardens | Norma

Heron at Swan Lake | Pete

Morris Island Lighthouse | Vanessa Kauffmann

Egret in Nest | Pete Lawrence

Palmetto Moon | Ber

Mt Carmel Presbyterian | Bill Fitzpatrick

Cost to Build & Maintain the SC Picture Project ...

The SC Picture Project may look easy, but it isn't! It is truly a labor of love, created and maintained, with your generous assistance, by a small team of people who love South Carolina and are trying to document its history in a permanent online repository.

Several people have asked why we need to raise \$19K+ in order to keep the SC Picture Project alive for another six months. Given this, I thought it would be helpful to spell out our expenses.

The sole expenses covered by this \$19K are the salaries of our two employees, [Brandon](#). If you do the math, you will see that both of them earn very modest salaries, and we could pay them much more. They truly deserve it.

Tara researches every landmark we add to the project and documents its history in an article. All day long she works – reading, writing, and reading some more. Some landmarks are more obscure than others, and many afternoons she spends tracking down librarians, pastors, museum directors, and other local historians by phone.

Brandon, who is one of the [most talented documentary photographers in our state](#), takes beautiful photos he shares on [our Facebook page](#) and on the [main SC Picture Project](#). He also curates our Facebook page, spreading South Carolina's history and beauty. He keeps the community engaged and helps it grow. This translates to a deeper knowledge of our landmarks, as our members share information they've learned from their families or their own hand experiences.

Right now, we are not asking for funds for any of our other needs – including but not limited to website hosting, online file storage, external hard drives, our computers, electricity, our phone bill, travel costs, and research materials like books and documentaries. We also did not have any funds to pay my own salary. Until now, I have worked 20 hours a week on the SC Picture Project. I will no longer be able to do so unless we are able to obtain grants and/or sponsors.

Over the next three-to-six months, we will become independent from SCIWAY. We will have to cover all of the expenses that SCIWAY has graciously covered for us in the past. In all, we project our annual budget will need to be at least \$45,000-\$55,000.

[Previous Issues of SCIWAY News](#)

This message was sent to kestert@aging.sc.gov

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SCIWAY, pronounced "sky-way," is an acronym for South Carolina's Information Highway.

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