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Attachments: 112515 MM Report for DR-4241-SC.docx

FYSA-DR-4241 SC Media Monitoring Morning Report 11/25/15

NEWS CLIPS

SOUTH CAROLINA-DR-4241

Wednesday, Nov. 25, 2015

Happy Thanksgiving! No report tomorrow.
Clips will resume Friday.

Issues:

- ABC station in Charleston reports that homeowners in West Ashley hope **FEMA** will buy them out. No indication that the station ever contacted **FEMA** for input before airing the story.
- Greenwood newspaper: “**FEMA** denies 2 in 5 claims.” Story does explain denials are often due to missing information and includes quotes from **FEMA** spokesman.

Summary:

- West Ashley neighborhood residents hope to get flooded homes bought out.
- Greenwood Index-Journal: 2 in 5 **FEMA** applicants are denied.
- Thanks to **FEMA**, Johnsonville man and his mother were able to move into a new home, just in time for the holidays; WBTW (Myrtle Beach) report.
- D-SNAP announced in Orangeburg newspaper
- Horry Independent has detailed article on DRCs still open and **FEMA**, SBA assisting survivors
- Lexington County family has new mobile home thanks to state senator ad community; .no mention of **FEMA** aid to this family
- Richland County flood damage estimate is \$15.1 million for infrastructure
- More articles detail the flood damage sustained by farmers in SC
- Friends of Cypress Gardens, a non-profit group that helps fund the park, voted to freeze funding until public officials have a plan in place and there is a demonstrated need for the nonprofit’s funds. **FEMA** mentioned.
- As holiday travel ramps up, reminders given about some road still being closed from flood damage, but SCDOT says its repairs are ahead of schedule
- Bluffton lawmaker’s holiday week column is about the importance of talking to one’s family about disasters..

Analysis:

- **FEMA** is the focus of several stories today, including a misleading “**FEMA** buyouts” story out of the Charleston area, a good-news report from Johnsonville family whose home was replaced, and a detailed report out of Horry County about how **FEMA** and SBA are still helping survivors at DRCs.

Social Listening Analysis:

- **FEMA**. Conversations about **FEMA** remain low overall. There are some mentions from local outlets posting updates on the DRC closings and openings.
- **Community Relief**. Community relief groups continue to share updates on their activities and needs of

community members.

Floods

[Shadowmoss residents hope FEMA will buy out flooded home, let them move \(WCIV\)](#)
[FEMA denies 2 in 5 claims \(Greenwood Index-Journal\)](#)
[Flood victims in Johnsonville have 'new reason to be thankful' this holiday season \(WBTW\)](#)
[Disaster SNAP signup announced \(Times and Democrat\)](#)
[FEMA, Small Business Administration still offering aid to Horry County flood victims \(Horry Independent\)](#)
[Disaster loan center opens in Mullins after severe storms and flooding in November \(WPDE\)](#)
[Giving thanks: Flood victims feel blessed \(Summerville Journal Scene\)](#)
[Nonprofit Group Freezes Funds To Swamped Cypress Gardens \(Berkeley Independent\)](#)
[Community comes together to give Pelion family a new beginning \(WACH\)](#)
[Richland County officials estimate \\$15.1 million required to cover flood damages \(ColaDaily\)](#)
[In Carolinas, Historic Rainfall Leading To Severe Crop Losses \(WFAE\)](#)
[Flooding delays harvest, ruins crops for Horry County farmers \(WMBF\)](#)
[Flood damage won't stop Forest Lake Fabrics from re-opening \(WIS\)](#)
[Midlands' Christmas trees standing tall after floods \(WOLO\)](#)
[Congestion expected on S.C. roads during holiday travel \(The State\)](#)
[SCDOT says they are ahead of schedule with reopening roads & bridges \(WCBD\)](#)
[Troopers increase patrols on start of busy travel weekend \(WLTX\)](#)
[Local agency reaches milestone, continues to seek positive outcomes for homeless \(WIS\)](#)
[Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner Celebrates 25 Years \(WLTX\)](#)
[Global Pump aids flood relief at Clemson University](#)
[Fruit of the Loom aids in ongoing Disaster Relief efforts in South Carolina \(WCBD\)](#)
[The spirit of giving \(The State\)](#)
[Lifeforce Karate Raises Money For Flood Victims, Red Cross \(WLTX\)](#)
[Columbia photographers offering free photo sessions for flood victims \(The State\)](#)
[Brewery employees head to SC to help gut homes \(Hendersonville, NC, Times-News\)](#)
[Topography, growth make dealing with flooding a challenge \(Wilmington, NC, Star News\)](#)
[Talk to your family about natural disasters \(Savannah Morning News\)](#)
[Scope: How much thought are you giving to giving thanks? \(The State\)](#)
[Fireflies open for business in the Vista \(ColaDaily\)](#)
[Commentary: We're thankful for state's spirit, resolve \(Bluffton Today\)](#)

TV/Radio Clips

Floods

[Shadowmoss residents hope FEMA will buy out flooded home, let them move \(WCIV\)](#)

[WCIV ABC4](#) Charleston, Nov. 24, 2015

WEST ASHLEY, S.C. (WCIV) -- More than 30 West Ashley homeowners are rebuilding only to possibly relocate after their neighborhood flooded twice this year.

The City of Charleston is working with **FEMA** to declare their homes uninhabitable, but that could mean more problems for people in Shadowmoss who were forced out of their homes by recording flooding.

"All my furniture is gone from here. The sunroom had furniture with the TV," said Florence Chrusz as she looks at what's missing from her condominium almost three months after flood waters washed away her first flood. "And that was like three to four feet of water."

She's finally moving back into her home on Tuesday after being forced out Aug. 31.

"It's going to look -- it's going to be different. But it's home," she said.

Chrusz says she's ready for federal officials to offer her money to move because the city can't promise her neighborhood won't flood in the future.

"As long as they give me the value pre-flood I am out of here. And most of my neighbors feel the same way, particularly since most of them are in their late 80s, early 90s," she said.

Charleston County Councilman Dean Riegel admits there are no affordable ways to prevent flooding in certain

Shadowmoss neighborhoods. That's why city leaders are asking federal officials to buy out Bridgepointe property owners.

"To buy them out and then tear their homes down is just -- I wish there were better solutions, Bill," Riegel said.

Until that happens, federal money is being used to repair the damages.

"You still have to live over the next six months, nine months, or twelve months while **FEMA** makes those determinations. So for that reason, Bill, I've said go ahead and try to get your life back to normal as quickly as possible," Riegel said.

But that means awaiting a certain fate for the residents in Shadowmoss.

"When it floods again, it's going to be gone again. So I'm pre-planning for the next flood," Chrusz said.

Chrusz isn't hopeful her newly rebuilt condo will survive the next big storm. That's why she's ready to move at 79 years old.

"I'm getting pretty tired of it, you know. I did not imagine that I'd be going through this at my age," she said.

Riegel says city and county engineers will meet with flood-prone West Ashley property owners in December to talk about how and why the floods are happening. They'll also talk about what's next as they wait on a decision from **FEMA**.

FEMA denies 2 in 5 claims (Greenwood Index-Journal)

Missing information might be factor in denials

By: MARY KATE MCGOWAN

[Greenwood Index-Journal](#), November 25, 2015

George McKinney, Greenwood County Emergency Management coordinator, said about 41 percent of **Federal Emergency Management Agency** individual assistance registrations in Greenwood County are denied.

But the registration denials for disaster assistance from early October's historic flooding could stem from a lack of information and not a lack of need.

McKinney said people should not stop trying to get aid after they receive an ineligibility letter.

"That's just a process," he said.

According to a Greenwood County Emergency Services press release, **FEMA** might deny disaster assistance if some of the required information is missing. To appeal an unfavorable determination letter, applicants must do so in writing within 60 days of the letter's date.

Applicants might need to include return insurance information, complete and return required paperwork and applications or provide information that proves ownership of damaged property.

For applicants who are insured, they should talk with their insurance company to obtain a settlement letter that explains what is covered under the insurance plan.

FEMA spokesman Carl Henderson said about 89,000 people have registered for disaster assistance in South Carolina, and 304 people have applied in Greenwood County. He said about \$66.7 million has been approved for individual assistance in South Carolina.

With 60 inspectors in the field, Henderson said **FEMA** has completed more than 72,400 inspections in South Carolina.

The deadline to apply for **FEMA** individual assistance and Small Business Administration loans in Greenwood County is Dec. 4.

People who need help with their **FEMA** appeal can call the **FEMA** helpline at 864-621-3362. Disaster survivors who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability and use a TTY can call 800-462-7585. When registering for disaster assistance, people need to have the following: -- Date of loss -- Social Security number -- Current mailing address and damaged home address, including zip codes -- Telephone numbers -- Names of household members at the time of the disaster -- Insurance information -- Total gross income for the household -- Bank account numbers if they want to have money deposited directly if eligible -- Loss descriptions

Flood victims in Johnsonville have 'new reason to be thankful' this holiday season (WBTW)

By Taylor Herlong

[WBTW News 13 Myrtle Beach CBS](#), Nov. 25, 2015

JOHNSONVILLE, SC (WBTW) – It's been several weeks since the historic flooding hit Florence County and forced several people in Johnsonville out of their homes.

One of those families thought they would be homeless for the holidays, but instead, they say they now have a new reason to be thankful.

Six weeks ago, Harvey Creel sat on his front porch, and through tears, told News 13 about losing everything to the flood.

“We still here, and I reckon that’s all that counts,” said Creel.

That loss included not being able to live with his 97-year-old mother because the conditions in their old home were just too dangerous.

In that home, the sights and smells from the flood are still left behind. In some areas, the floors are completely washed away, and throughout the home, the smell of mold is overwhelming.

This week, Creel’s story is different.

“We can call it the Red Cross house, the relief center,” said Creel walking through his new home.

Thanks to **FEMA**, he and his mother were able to move into a new home, just in time for the holidays.

“I like it. It’s bigger, it’s better, it has more room in it. It’s alright,” said Creel.

Creel says the new home has given him a whole new reason to be thankful this Thanksgiving, but more than anything, he’s thankful to be back with his mom.

“I’m glad to be here, and I’m glad she’s here,” Creel said pointing at his mom.

So far, **FEMA** has provided 87,000 South Carolinians, like Creel, with assistance.

Nearly 3,700 people in Florence County alone applied to receive help from **FEMA**.

Disaster SNAP signup announced (Times and Democrat)

[Times and Democrat](#), Orangeburg, Nov. 24, 2015

The South Carolina Department of Social Services announced that Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program assistance will be available from Tuesday through Thursday, Dec. 1-3, in Orangeburg County.

It will also be available in Darlington, Georgetown, Greenwood and Kershaw counties.

Any household that resided within those counties at the time of the flooding and suffered unreimbursed disaster losses may be eligible to receive temporary DSNAP assistance.

DSNAP benefits are provided via an electronic debit-like card and can be used to purchase food items at grocery stores and other authorized retailers.

Applicants should be prepared to provide proof of identity, proof of address, proof of income, proof of the value of unreimbursed damages incurred as a direct result of the storm and proof of loss or inaccessibility of income.

All applications are subject to review. If it is determined that an applicant received benefits that he was not entitled to, the applicant will be required to pay them back.

Current SNAP recipients in the following Orangeburg County zip codes do not need to come to a local county office to receive DSNAP benefits; they will automatically receive a supplement on their EBT cards: 29018, 29039, 29047, 29048, 29059, 29112, 29113, 29115, 29118, 29142 and 29163.

Current Orangeburg County SNAP recipients who do not live within the zip codes listed above and who suffered a disaster loss may file an Affidavit of Loss to request a supplement of their October SNAP benefits.

Please note that both non-SNAP and SNAP residents in the affected counties seeking assistance may apply between 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, Dec. 1-3, for the Disaster SNAP at Edisto Fork United Methodist Church, 356 Lariot Road, Orangeburg.

FEMA, Small Business Administration still offering aid to Horry County flood victims (Horry Independent)

August R. Dittbenner

[Horry Independent](#), Nov. 23, 2015

Even though the South Strand disaster recovery center has been shut down, two other disaster recovery centers remain open in Horry County to help victims of the early October flood, at the North Strand Recreation Center and at the Horry County Courthouse in Conway.

Michael Wade, regional spokesman for the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, outlined a number of opportunities for households who need help, some of which come from **FEMA** and others, which do not.

“With **FEMA**, anything they’re eligible for is based on the family makeup,” Wade said. “What one family gets, another family may not be eligible for– it’s dependent on the needs of the household.”

Wade said the disaster recovery centers are administered by **FEMA**, but are set up in conjunction with local and state emergency management personnel. That’s important to remember because some assistance may come from local sources.

Flood victims can also call South Carolina’s 211 hotline, which helps connect individuals and communities with nonprofit organizations that may be able to help continue recovery efforts. If a victim cannot get to a disaster recovery center, they can still register either online or through **FEMA**’s toll-free number, 1-800-621-3362.

As of Nov. 14, 4,532 households registered for assistance through **FEMA** in Horry County.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) also has funds available to help flood victims. And the assistance available from the SBA isn’t just for businesses.

SBA area spokesman Tom Nocera said SBA loans are available for homeowners, renters, and businesses of any size.

Homeowners or renters must register with **FEMA** to receive assistance, Nocera said.

“Most of the time, when they register with **FEMA**, people will hear that they have been referred to the SBA to determine if a loan might be the best solution for their recovery,” he said.

Homeowners can get loans of up to \$200,000 to make repairs on their primary residences, and renters can receive up to \$40,000 for replacement of personal property including vehicles.

And if someone is approved, they don’t have to take the loan, or can choose to accept a smaller amount, so there is no risk to applying.

Business owners do not need to apply with **FEMA**, Nocera noted, and there are multiple ways the SBA can assist.

Businesses and private nonprofit organizations can receive loans of up to \$2 million to repair physical damages and as much as another \$2 million to help account for economic injury— such as lost business caused by the disaster.

Interested parties should apply with the SBA through their website, <http://sba.gov>, or through their toll-free number, 1-800-659-2955. The toll-free number is available from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. on weekdays and from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays.

But the deadline to get assistance from either organization is coming up fast.

For households, the deadline to get assistance is Dec. 4. For businesses, physical damage assistance ends on Dec. 4, while economic losses end July 4, 2016.

Nocera also encouraged anyone who has suffered damages from the flood to go ahead and apply.

“The SBA has already approved over \$63 million in disaster loans in South Carolina, and many more are in the approval process,” said Nocera. “We just want to make sure that, by the time the program folds up, everybody who needs help has been given assistance.”

Disaster loan center opens in Mullins after severe storms and flooding in November (WPDE)

[WPDE, ABC 15, Florence-Myrtle Beach](#), Nov. 24, 2015

A Disaster Loan Outreach Center opened today, Nov. 24, in Mullins to help businesses and residents affected by severe storms and flooding on Nov. 4.

Residents and businesses can apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

SBA's customer service representatives will be available at the Disaster Loan Outreach Center in Mullins to answer questions about the disaster loan program and help individuals complete their applications.

Marion County and the adjacent counties of Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry and Williamsburg are eligible to apply.

The center is located at Mullins City Hall, 151 East Front Street, and is open as indicated below:

Opens: Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 8:30 a.m.

Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekdays

10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Saturday

Closed: Thursday, Nov. 26 for Thanksgiving and Sunday, Nov. 29

Closes: Tuesday, Dec. 1 at 4 p.m.

Because this is a temporary location, people are encouraged to visit the center by Dec. 1.

"Loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property," said Frank Skaggs, director of SBA's Field Operations Center East in Atlanta.

Applicants may apply online using the Electronic Loan Application (ELA) at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>.

Businesses and individuals may also obtain information and loan applications by calling the SBA's Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955 (1-800-877-8339 for the deaf and hard-of-hearing), or by emailing disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

Loan applications can also be downloaded at www.sba.gov/disaster. Completed applications should be returned to the center or mailed to: U.S. Small Business Administration, Processing and Disbursement Center, 14925 Kingsport Road, Fort Worth, TX 76155.

The filing deadline to return applications for physical property damage is Jan. 19, 2016. The deadline to return economic injury applications is Aug. 19, 2016.

Giving thanks: Flood victims feel blessed (Summerville Journal Scene)

By Jenna-Ley Harrison

[Summerville Journal Scene](#), Nov. 25, 2015

Dana Evans banged a hammer against his house as work crews streamed into his yard this month trying to get his

Holly Street house back in livable condition.

It was only weeks earlier that his one-story Summerville home succumbed to the state's most historic flooding event. Water rose several feet inside his house, and he and his family were forced to evacuate to a fellow church member's home for respite.

But now, the pieces are falling into place, and his home is slowly being put back together. Evans even anticipated having it fully fixed and furnished and living again inside by the first week of December.

"Now the pieces are starting to come together," he said.

He received more than \$60,000 in federal aid from **FEMA**, and the money has allowed him to gut the walls and remove insulation and siding along the outside of the home. **FEMA** allowed him to repair up to a foot above the highest damaged area along the siding — evidence his home has once been underwater.

For the last several weeks, he's stopped by every day to help contractors and construction men make repairs. He initially received help from a disaster relief crew from his church, Summerville Baptist. "It was a blessing. I have always gone to help others, and now, I needed help. I didn't ask. The group just came over to help," Evans said.

And despite the hassle of once watching his home fall apart, he's happy to see restoration, knowing that the epic flooding could have been much worse — even mirror the deadly nature of its impact in the Midlands.

A couple of houses down, former military man Leo La Chapelle used measuring tape to determine measurements of his freshly-painted yet empty pantry. His entire home had to be gutted after the flood, and everything that could be salvaged, including toilets, sat piled together inside his garage.

He and wife Amanda and their teen daughter also hoped to be back in their restored home by next month. For the last several weeks, they've been staying in a hotel in town, using a financial living stipend they received from **FEMA**.

Multiple sandbags still littered his property, including a pile of at least 20 stacked against the sliding glass door on the back of his house. He had placed them there to keep water from pouring into his kitchen and living room, but that was too late. His home had already sustained the worst.

The couple has lived in the home only a few years, and although gutting it, repainting and refurbishing never crossed their minds when they purchased the house, they found a silver lining through it all.

"It gave us a chance to get things upgraded," Leo LaChapelle said.

He also praised the memory of helping hands who knocked on his door the week after the tragedy, when he said between 20 and 30 good Samaritans from an area Mormon church worked hours on end one day — almost until nightfall — tearing out drywall, pulling up soggy carpet and sifting through the wreckage.

While the floodwaters downgraded their living space to a near one-room dwelling for a month, the Summerville residents have maintained nothing but a positive attitude and thankful hearts.

"We have been very fortunate. The hotel has been understandable and worked with us," Leo LaChapelle said.

He also remembered the helpful words of neighbors across the street, and how they checked on the La Chapelles just moments before the waters crept in their garage. They had called Leo La Chapelle's wife and urged the couple to move their vehicles to a nearby area for the evening. The reminder saved the couple thousands and kept their vehicles' engines from flooding — a fate that struck numerous other vehicles across the Lowcountry.

Even as Leo La Chapelle recounted October's tragic weather anomaly, he brushed off the horror of his personal problems, instead shaking his head and pointing to other houses along his street and in the Arbor Oaks subdivision where he felt other residents suffered worse blows.

That included neighbors Laurin and Michael DeLoach, also on Holly Street.

Earlier this month, Laurin DeLoach pulled clear, dusty coverings off items in her garage, littered with salvaged furniture, appliances and other belongings. Even her daughter Natalie, 3, understood something was off-kilter about the tall, unkempt pile and used a toy broom to sweep trash and other dirt from around it.

But her mother surveyed the chaos and other disarray inside her two-story house with nothing but a smile, as she pointed out how quickly repairs have come along. She stood amazed while surveying a living room floor still covered in paper and tape because she only saw progress and a future finished product better than what previously filled the home.

A workman stood high up on a ladder repairing a kitchen wall, but all she focused on was the makeshift wooden sink that her husband built for the family to wash dishes and hands as a way to retain some semblance of normal daily life.

The family of four, including another son, 1-year-old Lucas, and their Boxer "Diamond," expect to have a fully-functional living space by the end of the month.

For several weeks prior, the DeLoaches were stretched out on the second floor, while the lower level underwent maintenance and floor work.

Ironically, the flood flip-flopped family plans. Prepared last month to house in-laws for a few weeks who were

transitioning from selling their Goose Creek home and moving into a new one, the DeLoaches were the ones uprooted instead.

But they tried not to let the change in plans overwhelm Natalie's approaching birthday. So even while their home sat destroyed and the immediate future looked bleak, the DeLoaches jetted off to Disney World to enjoy a planned celebration. Their church even hosted Natalie's birthday party, originally meant to be a fall shindig at the Summerville residence.

But through it all, the DeLoaches have basked in at least one overlying comfort. "We are so blessed to have flood insurance," Laurin DeLoach said.

Flood victims still have nine days to apply for **FEMA** assistance. The Small Business Administration is also offering low-interest loans for homeowners, renters and business owners. The deadline to apply is Dec. 4. For more information, visit websites for **FEMA**, SBA and Dorchester County.

Nonprofit Group Freezes Funds To Swamped Cypress Gardens (Berkeley Independent)

[Berkeley \(SC\) Independent](#), November 25, 2015

As federal and county officials begin repair assessments for Cypress Gardens, the nonprofit group that aids with thousands of dollars in expenses every year has decided not to release any money toward the publicly owned tourism destination in the meantime.

Cypress Gardens closed following the early October floods that devastated much of the state. County officials have estimated the site needs \$10 million in repairs following the flood and rain damage to buildings and exhibits.

During the Nov. 18 meeting of the Friends of Cypress Gardens, members voted to freeze funding until public officials have a plan in place and there is a demonstrated need for the nonprofit's funds.

The Friends supplied \$30,000 in funding to the taxpayer-supported Gardens last year. The organization began operations in 2010.

Friends' members also expressed concern that while the Gardens will likely reopen, it might not be the venue it once was.

Most of the Gardens' staff was laid off on Oct. 26 while the destination remains closed for repairs. Friends members expressed concern over what work will be done to ready the site for opening next year with such a limited staff.

"I think the Gardens, as we know it, might not reopen," Friends Treasurer Allen Carter said to the group.

Friends President Joan Stearman echoed Carter's statement and expressed concern that the Gardens might reopen as simply a nature trail.

Dona Sneath, who was initially let go but has since rejoined the Cypress Gardens staff as a horticulturist, refuted the claims.

"They're not closing the Gardens. They've got big plans for the Gardens," Sneath said. She added that the only change she's aware of is that they may no longer offer guided boat tours.

Sneath attended the meeting and asked the Friends to not withdraw their funding while the site is in repairs. But the group's president and most of the voting members were not moved.

"(Federal and county agencies) should be able to take care of this," Stearman said.

Some members were angry at the decision to let go 16 employees last month. But Stearman told them the nonprofit has no say in management decisions.

"That's not our call," Stearman said. "It is not retribution. We are freezing funds that it is advisable that we wait and see what the county and **FEMA** will do."

Berkeley County Deputy Supervisor of Finance Tim Callanan, who oversees Cypress Gardens, did not disagree with the nonprofit's decision.

"I understand there are some question marks out there as to the rebuilding and the timeline. There are questions for us right now, too. That is completely understandable and a fiscally responsible step on behalf of their members," Callanan said.

He said that within next 30 days the county will have a clear plan moving forward with the Gardens.

The nonprofit will continue to sell T-shirts and fundraise, but any money coming in will not be spent until the board votes to unfreeze funding.

Community comes together to give Pelion family a new beginning (WACH)

By Shelli Adamczyk

[WACH Fox 57 Columbia](#), Nov. 24, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC (WACH) - One Pelion family is still left searching for the light at the end of the tunnel, but are one huge step closer.

Since last month's flooding Teresa Anderson, her five kids and the family dog, Baby, have been living in a motel,

but starting next week, they will have a new place to call home.

The roof of their mobile home collapsed during last month's storm.

It wasn't until the boys went back to school that anyone knew the family was affected.

That's when some of the employees at Pelion Elementary School and local church groups stepped in to help.

Now, after a month of living in the hotel there is hope for a chance to move on.

"They said, we know that you had damage and we want to help you from then on they got in touch with Senator Shealy and she came out and it's just been overwhelming the love and support," Anderson said.

After Senator Katrina Shealy reached out to her contacts, the family was able to move into the hotel room, and now they have a new home after local businesses and community members raised almost \$60,000.

"Miss Anderson and family are now owners of five bedroom, three bath mobile home that sits on two acres that in a great area and still in Pelion and the same school district. We needed to do this as a community and come together to help this family," the Lexington Senator said.

The two sets of twin boys, Khaliek and Khallen, 12, and Nicholas and Noah, 10, will now have their own bedroom, much different than the one room all four boys used to share. 17-year-old, Samiyah, will now have her own bedroom, closet and bathroom.

"We are first and foremost most thankful to God, for putting these people in our lives to be able to help us," Anderson said.

Although Senator Shealy says there is still a lot of work to be done, the family will be able to move in sometime next week.

To help the Anderson family on their road to recovery, find out more information here.

Richland County officials estimate \$15.1 million required to cover flood damages (ColaDaily)

By Kelly Petty

[Columbia Daily/ColaDaily.com](http://ColumbiaDaily/ColaDaily.com), Nov. 24, 2015

Richland County officials estimate more than \$15.1 million will be needed to begin the long term process of rebuilding roads and infrastructure damaged in the October floods.

"That is something that we're going to have to deal with in a financial plan moving forward," said County Administrator Tony McDonald.

McDonald said during Tuesday's flood disaster recovery work session that \$12.2 million of the funds would go toward permanently reinforcing roads and bridges initially repaired to make them passable.

The county already has been reimbursed \$848,000 from **FEMA** for the initial operating costs the county incurred. McDonald said those dollars would go back into departmental budgets to pay for labor costs and employee time.

County Council also allocated \$1.5 million in emergency funds to hire outside consultant Tetra Tech to begin flood assessments and to spray for mosquitoes in the Lower Richland area. More than \$300,000 in dollars of those funds remains unused.

County officials continue to seek assistance from **FEMA** for infrastructure and to support homeowners.

Mike King, who was hired by the county to manage flood recovery, said 8,000 applications had been certified through the federal government's individual and household assistance program with more than \$13.5 million in funding disbursed to residents.

Residents can receive up to \$33,000 through the program for temporary housing, home repairs, clothes and appliances. King said homeowners have until Dec. 4 to apply for **FEMA** individual assistance at any disaster recovery center.

King also said private organizations that aided in the flood recovery have played a major role in moving the county forward. He said programs like the One SC Flood Relief Fund administered by the Central Carolina Community Foundation, which offers funding to nonprofits who offer aid, can ensure people in need don't fall through the cracks as the state rebuilds.

"There's only so much federal, state and local money," he said. "That will help us fill the gaps."

County Councilman Kelvin Washington recommended costs need to be evaluated for the partnership and coordination of volunteers and nonprofit organizations before the county reports its damage estimates to the state government.

"We've got people still trying to get their lives back in order," he said. "All of these other programs are being shut down. We need to do an analysis of that social piece."

Assistant County Administrator Warren Harley said the county has been working with the state government to develop a strategy to assist individuals in the long term once federal dollars run dry.

Tetra Tech consultants said the focus of the next year will be on making repairs to water and sewer systems,

electric lines, roads, bridges and constructing temporary housing.

A longterm recovery plan, which could last for the next five years, would focus on ensuring structures can withstand future natural disasters, helping homeowners raise their homes and initiating property buyback for commercial and residential buildings.

Gills Creek Watershed, Stoop Creek Watershed and Lower Richland have been designated priority areas in which county staff have begun collecting high water mark and debris line data to develop flood mitigation plans.

County Councilwoman Joyce Dickerson questioned how the county and the city of Columbia would work together to address problems in areas where jurisdictions overlap.

“These two governments don’t work the same,” she said.

McDonald said city officials planned to manage the recovery process and seek federal dollars to rebuild neighborhoods within city limits. The county will focus only on areas outside of the city, including smaller municipalities that have decided to join the county to seek reimbursement dollars from **FEMA**.

County staff plan to develop a comprehensive long term recovery plan over the next 90 days in addition to setting up a blue ribbon advisory committee that would be tasked with determining the county’s needs.

In Carolinas, Historic Rainfall Leading To Severe Crop Losses (WFAE)

By Michael Tomsic

[WFAE, Charlotte, NC](#) (NPR affiliate), Nov. 23, 2015

Historic rainfall is making this a grim year for one of the biggest industries in the Carolinas: farming. Just when fall crops were ready to harvest, catastrophic floods drowned fields and sidelined farm workers. Some in South Carolina say their losses are so severe that they may go out of business.

Kirkman Finlay, III walks through his farm in Columbia. About a month and a half ago on this low-lying field, he would’ve been swimming.

“Water was absolutely over our heads where we stand right now,” he says.

Record-setting downpours led to such severe flooding that some of his workers used a boat to check on this area.

That’s not even the image that sticks in Finlay’s mind.

“At the foot of the hill where I live, it looked like something you would see Hollywood create,” he says. “You know when you’re looking at a movie and it just is too spectacular? You’re waiting for somebody to yell cut.”

Water covered everything.

Across South Carolina, people faced their own version of this nightmare. The storm in early October flooded homes, destroyed roads and caused fatalities.

For many farmers, it’s a driving force behind the worst crop losses they’ve seen.

“The reports that you’ve heard about South Carolina agriculture, there is no exaggeration,” says state Agriculture Commissioner Hugh Weathers. “I have seen all parts of this state except maybe one corner that has been severely impacted by the timing and the amount of this rain.”

Meteorologists called it a thousand-year storm. Jake Crouch of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says Hurricane Joaquin out in the Atlantic combined with an inland weather system.

“The two interacted to bring a flow of heavy tropical moisture into South Carolina, and both systems were moving so slowly that it was an unprecedented precipitation event,” he says.

It may be the wettest October in South Carolina history. Crouch says they’re actually not sure yet.

“Some of the one-day precipitation totals that we saw, particularly along the coast, were so large that they flagged some of our internal quality control,” he says.

They were so big the computers thought they were fake. Crouch says they’re fixing that now.

The storm also drenched North Carolina. State agriculture spokesman Brian Long says the eastern part of the state got the worst of it.

“I know from visiting with a peanut farmer in Bladen County, he was looking at about an 80 percent loss on his peanut crop,” he says.

But Long says statewide, the peanut crop is on pace to beat its 10-year average. Although some other crops are worse off, Long says his state is lucky compared to South Carolina.

In Newberry, South Carolina, John Long (no relation to Brian) is finishing up his soybean harvest. He points out the rain was only the latest problem for farmers this year.

“It wasn’t like it was just one disaster; it was almost like it was a combination of three things that got us in this situation,” he says.

First, low commodity prices meant it’d be challenging year even with good weather. Then a drought over the summer ruined his corn crop.

“Then we had the flood that messed up the quality on the soybeans and it also pretty much messed up the cotton

crop," he says. "We're going to come up short this year. I told some folks it's a good thing I like soup and cheese toast because I'm going to probably be eating a lot of it this winter."

Long has a beef and turkey operation that'll hold him over.

About two hours east in Turbeville, Jeremy Cannon's family farm is looking at significant losses on every one of their crops.

"There's farmers that's going to quit after this year if we don't find some help; I'm on the list," Cannon says. "I've discussed it with my father. He's been doing it his whole life, and I've been doing it my whole life. I couldn't ever see myself doing anything else."

But he says if you can't pay your bills, then you don't have a choice.

The emergency loan he's hoping for is within the range the federal government can give in disaster areas like this. He says he'll decide whether to fold by March.

Driving around in Columbia, Kirkman Finlay, III says this will be the worst year he's had in 16 years of farming. He's in good enough shape financially to stick it out though.

He says it's been inspiring to see how the community has supported each other.

"I just wish that we could get government to respond the way that the volunteer groups do," he says.

Finlay is a state house representative, and he wishes the legislature had come back early for an emergency session on the recovery. State leaders have said they'll wait until the regular session begins in January.

Flooding delays harvest, ruins crops for Horry County farmers (WMBF)

By Amy Lipman

[WMBF, Myrtle Beach-Florence NBC](#), Nov. 24, 2015

HORRY COUNTY, SC (WMBF) - Horry County farmers lost at least \$9 million in crops as a result of October's severe rain and flooding, according to William Hardee, an agronomist with Clemson Cooperative Extension. That's only the low estimate based on the damage assessment forms his office has so far.

"My daddy is 85 years old. He was out here the other day and he said, 'I'm 85 years. I haven't ever seen anything like this in my life,'" said Ronald Rabon, owner of Double R Farms. "He said he's never seen that much water in that short a period of time."

Hardee said every kind of crop was damaged in the flooding, except for tobacco and corn, but those suffered during the drought this summer.

Soybeans, cotton and peanuts were the hardest hit.

Rabon grows two of those crops, but he's especially concerned about his cotton.

"They were rotten, so what we get isn't any good," he said. "The price of it has gone to nothing."

Due to the low quality, Hardee said cotton took a 40 percent price cut.

"You'll get 40, 50 cents at the most," Rabon said. "You can't survive on that. It won't pay the bills."

However, Rabon's cotton picker has been sitting next to a field for a month because that field is still too wet and soggy to pick most of the cotton.

The water also delayed sweet potato harvesting at Dixon Farms.

"It caused us not to get in the field and get the potatoes," said Warren Dixon, the farm's owner. "Potatoes won't stand but so much water, so it was just devastating."

Even though Governor Nikki Haley requested USDA expedite crop insurance payments, both Dixon and Rabon said crop insurance barely helps.

"Crop insurance will not cover the input we got in this crop and we need some help," Dixon said. "And we don't need small interest loans. We need some grants."

Farmers can still fill out damage assessment forms at the Clemson Cooperative Extension office in Horry County. The phone number is 843-365-6715.

Flood damage won't stop Forest Lake Fabrics from re-opening (WIS)

By Meaghan Norman

[WIS TV 10, Columbia NBC](#), Nov. 24, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) -

Forest Lake Fabrics, the fabric store on Forest Drive heavily damaged by October's floods could re-open this spring.

All the inventory -- valued at about \$1 million, was ruined. None of the fabric could be saved. The building still stands, but needs major renovation.

The property sits up against Gills Creek, which flooded much of the Forest Drive area.

Store owner Michael Marsha says he's starting over.

"When the dams broke, the force of the water blew," Marsha said. "I had stumps, I had trees, I had railroad ties,

had kayaks, I had parts of docks in the building -- everything, the force of the water blew through and blew out the front window and really a lot of the fabric was across the street in the woods."

This will be Marsha's first major revamping of the store in 25 years, and he's getting some help. Dodge Ram donated a new work van for the family after hearing about their loss.

Midlands' Christmas trees standing tall after floods (WOLO)

By Grace Joyal

[WOLO ABC Columbia](#), Nov. 24, 2015

LEXINGTON, S.C. (WOLO) -- Midlands' Christmas tree growers are ready for the post-Thanksgiving rush after a year of weather extremes.

Price's Christmas Tree Farm, in Lexington, has been in business since 1984. Owner Bryan Price says raising trees is hard enough as it is, but October's flooding presented a new set of challenges.

Price was unable to do any fall planting in the low-lying part of his farm, because of the water table level.

"When I dig a hole, it fills up with water," Price says, "so I'm just holding off so hopefully this winter, things will dry out."

This summer's drought left the trees unshaken- Price has an irrigation system sourced by a pond that stayed stocked with water.

Any setbacks are not slowing growers down. The long weekend after Thanksgiving is one of their busiest times. Price will have six extra set of hands working.

Congestion expected on S.C. roads during holiday travel (The State)

By Cassie Cope

[The State \(Columbia\)](#), Nov. 24, 2015

About 592,000 S.C. residents will drive to their destinations

State transportation officials are suspending lane closures for construction projects on interstates

Flood-related construction ongoing, Lower Richland Boulevard reopened Tuesday

South Carolina drivers should expect congestion this Thanksgiving as more than half a million state residents travel for the holiday.

And while flood repairs will continue through the holidays, state transportation officials are trying to keep the lanes of traffic flowing.

From noon Wednesday through Monday, state transportation officials are prohibiting lane closures for construction projects that are not emergency- or flood-related. For example, the Interstate 26 widening project could continue, but lanes must stay open to traffic.

State transportation officials have not yet released a cost estimate for repairing the 541 state roads and bridges damaged by floodwaters, but expects to soon. "Once we finish our review of the numbers, we will release them," said acting Transportation Secretary Christy Hall on Tuesday. "We're still on target for a release around the Thanksgiving time frame."

At least 468 roads and bridges have reopened after sustaining damage from last month's historic flooding.

Another 11 roads were set to reopen by Thanksgiving, transportation officials said, adding six will meet Thursday's deadline and five others will be delayed until next week.

About 60 S.C. roads and bridges that remain closed are scheduled to reopen later. They include eight heavily trafficked routes around the state: Wilson Boulevard, Bluff Road and Congaree Road in Richland County; Saint Paul Road, U.S. 301 and Sumter Highway in Clarendon County; U.S. 176 in Newberry County and Cade Road in Williamsburg County.

Officials reopened Lower Richland Boulevard on Tuesday, good news for residents along that roadway, said state Sen. Darrell Jackson, D-Richland.

The road runs through Hopkins, an area hit hard by flooding.

"There are people who have had to travel as much as 20-30 minutes or more out of the way in order to get to work or to get back home and some even to get to their churches on Sunday," the Richland Democrat said.

Heavy traffic expected

Holiday drivers should expect some congestion. About 592,000 S.C. residents will drive to their destinations around the holiday, AAA Carolinas estimates.

From Wednesday through Sunday, the S.C. Highway Patrol will increase enforcement of seat belt and child-restraint violations, speeding and impaired driving, the agency said.

Traffic on major S.C. Interstates 95 and 26 may slow to a near standstill during peak travel times.

The interstate worsens as drivers cross over the state line from Georgia, said state Sen. Tom Davis, a Republican who lives in Beaufort, not far from the heavily trafficked interstate. "As you see the nice sign welcoming you to South

Carolina, one of the things that greets you is four lanes instead of six,” Davis said.

State Rep. Russell Ott, D-Calhoun, has roughly 20 miles of Interstate 26 in his district. In years past, traffic has been a mess around the Thanksgiving holiday on the interstate, Ott said.

The Sunday following Thanksgiving will likely be the worst day for traffic with everyone trying to get back home, he added.

Ott applauded the decision to halt construction work and keep lanes open. “With the increased traffic, you don’t want to put ... the workers at any greater risk than they already are,” Ott said. “At the same time, if you can prevent any type of backups or congestion, (that’s a) good thing.”

Thanksgiving roads deadline

Six of 11 closed roads estimated to be reopened by Thursday are on schedule. Five should reopen next week.

Opening by Thanksgiving:

Hotel Street and Sumter Highway in Clarendon County

Friendfield Road in Florence County

Ottawa Trail/Natchez Street and Woodberry Road in Lexington County

Foxworth Mill Road in Sumter County

Opening Dec. 4:

Rocky Grove Road in Aiken County

Home Branch Road in Clarendon County

Hill-Harrell Road in Florence County

Sandlewood Drive and Windy Road in Lexington County

SOURCE: S.C. Department of Transportation

SCDOT says they are ahead of schedule with reopening roads & bridges (WCBD)

By Kelly Bazzle

[WCBD, News 2, Charleston NBC](#), Nov. 25, 2015

SCDOT has released an update on the roads and bridges re-opening after last month’s historic flooding in South Carolina.

The good news, the state is currently ahead of schedule.

There were 541 roads and bridges closed during the peak of the flooding and that number is now down to 70.

There are currently 44 roads and 26 bridges still closed throughout the state.

All roads and bridges are open in Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester and Georgetown Counties.

There are two roads closed in Orangeburg County and three roads closed in Williamsburg County.

Get the full report [here](#).

Troopers increase patrols on start of busy travel weekend (WLTX)

By Roshanda Pratt

[WLTX 19 Columbia CBS](#), Nov. 24, 2015

Columbia, SC (WLTX)- If you are among the 660,000 South Carolinians planning to hit the road for the Thanksgiving holiday you won't be alone. The South Carolina Department of Public Safety will be on the road too.

Troopers are reminding motorists to be patient as their will likely be heavier traffic. As motorists prepare for travel, troopers are reminding drivers to avoid distractions, obey speed limits and stay rested and alert.

SCDPS is also reminding motorists to check with the South Carolina Department of Transportation's website for road closures since some roads and bridges remain closed due to October's flooding.

The official travel period begins 6 p.m. Wednesday and continues until Sunday at midnight. Last year, there were eight fatalities on South Carolina roadways during Thanksgiving weekend.

In order to keep motorists safe troopers will be out at the welcome centers and rest areas around the state Wednesday from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. giving out safety materials and talking about highway safety. You can see a list of locations [here](#).

“The fatality numbers are certainly a cause for concern as we expect heavy travel volumes over the coming days,” said SCDPS Director Leroy Smith. “The good news is that simple, safe driving behaviors, such as buckling up and increasing your following distance, can greatly reduce your chances of a deadly crash.”

Troopers say some of the primary violations they are enforcing include: safety belts/child restraint violations, speed and impaired driving.

Motorists are asked to report suspected drunk drivers to local law enforcement or call *HP (*47). SCDPS also urges motorists to move over for emergency vehicles and first responders to give them space to work safely.

The holiday travel period ends midnight Sunday.

Local agency reaches milestone, continues to seek positive outcomes for homeless (WIS)

By Jack Kuenzie

[WIS TV Columbia NBC](#), Nov. 24, 2015

COLUMBIA, SC (WIS) - Every homeless person has a different story.

Transitions director Craig Currey and his staff have heard those stories from their clients and they've responded. More than four years after the center opened at its location on Main and Calhoun Streets, they've helped 1,023 clients move into permanent homes.

"This is a team sport and we've got over 30 partners that come to Transitions to help," Currey said. "It might be help with mental health support or substance addiction support or job support. Ex-offenders, veteran support. Any of those partners that can really come and bring their resources to bear."

Along with multiple service providers, Transitions offers sleeping space for up to 260 people. However, with roughly 1,900 homeless in the Midlands as of a recent count, finding permanent homes continues to be a challenge. This fall's flood disaster made that challenge even more difficult.

"With the flooding that we've had, many of the places we were looking for are now occupied by other folks that have been displaced from their homes and they may have a job and can pay more money for a higher rent," Currey said. "So right now, it is tough."

Currey says Transitions has also been able to move more than 3,900 other struggling with homeless issues into what the organization calls "positive outcomes."

Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner Celebrates 25 Years (WLTX)

By Mary Sturgill

[WLTX 19, Columbia CBS](#), Nov. 24, 2015

Columbia, SC (WLTX) Two area churches are coming together to make sure everyone has a hot turkey dinner on Thanksgiving. For 25 years St. Peter's Catholic Church has partnered with the First Baptist Church in Columbia to serve the Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner. Organizer Robert Keeder has been involved since the dinner began. He tells News 19, they expect nearly 2,000 people to enjoy hot turkey dinners this year.

Keeder says, "It's been a blessing for all those who have given. I'm sure it's going to be for all those who receive it's better to give than to receive like the old Baptist hymn."

Cooking the turkeys started on Monday. Volunteers from St. Peters have cooked and carved up 150 turkeys. While the Baptist volunteers will serve up the sides: mashed potatoes, green beans stuffing and all the fixin's. They will start early Thursday morning to have dinner ready on time. Keeder says, "The baptist serve a good lunch."

Volunteers from both churches make and deliver desserts. Keeder says at the dinner there is so much more than just the great food though, He says, "Plenty of fellowship, warm clothing, plenty of eyeglasses. We got music. We got everything."

But for this special 25th anniversary there is a silver lining for flood victims. Keeder says organizers want to make sure anyone displaced by the flood joins in the festivities. He tells News 19, "I don't want anybody sitting in their hotel rooms feeling bad or despondent or in despair, First Baptist and St. Peters have saved the day for you."

Organizers tell news 19 they also deliver more than a 1,000 meals to people in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

They will also have a big display showing the 25 years of service to the community. The Interfaith Thanksgiving Dinner will be held from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM in the Carolina Coliseum, the Assembly Street Entrance... on Thursday, November 26, 2015.

Global Pump aids flood relief at Clemson University

[Worldpumps.com](#), 23 November 2015

Global Pump recently joined the flood relief efforts at Clemson University in the wake of Hurricane Joaquin.

The Category 4 hurricane only made landfall in the Bahamas, but areas of South Carolina recorded record-setting flooding reaching up to 2 ft in parts resulting from blown out dams.

Though its main campus was spared from the brunt of the rainfall, Robert Wells, Chief Facilities Officer at Clemson University in Clemson (SC), asked Global Pump for preventive flood relief on a weekend during which the campus hosted a nationally-televised football game. Wells was concerned that a pump station on the outskirts of campus would need some assistance keeping up with the stormwater.

Global Pump Account Manager Rich Kelly and his team determined that Wells would need four Global Pump 18GSTAP diesel-driven pumps tied in to independent 18-inch HDPE discharge lines with a discharge run approximately 600 ft from the pumps. These pumps pull from the basin that fed the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) pump station, pumping up and over a 60 ft high earth dam into Lake Hartwell.

"We were able to talk to the officials at Clemson and get an understanding of not only their suction and discharge points, but also their delivery schedule requirements, campus layout and where we might install equipment that would

be effective for relief, but non-obtrusive to any campus traffic flow, says Kelly.

"These types of considerations allow us to reinforce our value as pump specialists, and not just general equipment rental providers."

Pump delivery occurred on 4 October and job setup continued on-schedule. Though the stormwater did not compromise the pump station, University officials were granted the permits necessary to test backup pump performance. Upon successful testing, the equipment was quickly dismantled.

"Our goal was to provide relief at 20,000 gallons per minute, but we were actually able to reach 21,600 gallons per minute," Kelly reports.

Fruit of the Loom aids in ongoing Disaster Relief efforts in South Carolina (WCBD)

By ksuraci

[WCBD News 2 Charleston NBC](#), Nov. 24, 2015

BOWLING GREEN, Ky., Nov. 24, 2015– As disaster relief efforts remain underway in South Carolina and state officials report widespread devastation, Fruit of the Loom recently delivered 54,000 clothing items to those affected by the historic October floods.

"We have been humbled by the tremendous outpouring of support from people all over the world as South Carolina recovers from one of the worst disasters in our history," said Kim Stenson, Director of the S.C. Emergency Management Division. "This donation is huge for us, not only in quantity, but in that these items serve the most basic needs for hundreds of people who've lost everything."

The donation made to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, valued at \$250,000, includes T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweatpants, socks and underwear for men, women and children. Fruit of the Loom also contributed more than 600 T-shirts and \$5,000 to local nonprofit Water Missions in support of its effort to provide safe drinking water to victims during the floods.

"We're a proud community partner in South Carolina, so when these floods hit, they hit close to home," said Rick Medlin, President & CEO, Fruit of the Loom. "In asking how we could help, it became clear that often the most basic items are the most needed. We hope this donation will help provide some relief to those impacted by these disastrous floods, including some of our own employees, friends and family."

Fruit of the Loom currently employs 200 people at its distribution center located in Summerville, South Carolina. With a recent expansion that is doubling the size of the distribution center, Fruit of the Loom will be adding 50 more jobs for a total of 250 employees.

The spirit of giving (The State)

[The State \(Columbia\)](#), Nov. 24, 2015

(Flood-related excerpts from long article)

A.C. FLORA HIGH SCHOOL will host its DANCE Winter Showcase 6 p.m. Dec. 10-11 in its theater, 1 Falcon Drive. General admission is \$5. All proceeds will be donated to victims of the Oct. 4 flood.

RED CROSS is seeking monetary donations to help those affected by this year's floods. Donate at www.redcross.org/donate/weather.

UNITED WAY OF THE MIDLANDS is collecting funds for its Flood Disaster Relief Fund. Donate and learn more by visiting www.uway.org.

Lifeforce Karate Raises Money For Flood Victims, Red Cross (WLTX)

[WLTX 19, Columbia CBS](#), Nov. 24, 2015

Columbia, SC (WLTX) For a local karate studio, the flooding really hit home.

"One of our families was rescued out of their attic," said Billee Purvis, Chief Instructor at LifeForce Karate & Self-Defense. "That made things personal. We all wanted to do something."

Students at Lifeforce karate that helped raise \$1200

Students at Lifeforce karate that helped raise \$1200 for flood family. (Photo: Lifeforce Karate)

So they set about raising money for a flood victim at their studio and also the American Red Cross.

For a modest donation, students were allowed to wear a special Purple Belt (which is not used in their martial arts system) for the months of October and November, and were given a choice of donating to the family, or to the American Red Cross.

LifeForce Karate & Self-Defense will present \$1,500 raised over the past six weeks to Leah Reza and her family, and to the American Red Cross.

Columbia photographers offering free photo sessions for flood victims (The State)

By Erin Shaw

[The State \(Columbia\)](#), Nov. 24, 2015

After the historic flooding in October, Columbia photographer Lorin Fairweather wondered how she could help.

She knew many people had lost everything, including family photo albums.

"As a photographer I know how important special moments are," she said. "It's hard to think about them all being erased."

So Fairweather, along with four local photographers, formed Photos for Columbia, a collaboration offering free portrait sessions for those affected by flooding.

"While we can't reproduce old images of the past, we certainly can create new ones for couples and families who have been through so much," Fairweather wrote on her photography website.

People can submit a contact sheet and set up a portrait with a participating photographer. A portrait session will include edited, high-resolution digital images delivered in an online gallery with printing rights.

"I hope give these families a fresh new start," Fairweather said. "Maybe this is a way to spread some joy in down times."

Those interested can fill out a contact sheet for Photos for Columbia at Fairweather's website: lorinmariephotography.com/photosforcolumbia

Brewery employees head to SC to help gut homes (Hendersonville, NC, Times-News)

By Derek Lacey

[Times-News](#), Hendersonville, NC, Nov. 24, 2015

Workers at Oskar Blues Brewery in Brevard gave up their weekend last week, giving it to neighbors in need to the south.

Roughly 20 volunteers with Oskar Blues and its nonprofit CAN'd Aid Foundation traveled to Georgetown, S.C., one of the hardest-hit areas from October's floods in South Carolina, after the organization sent 3,600 cases of canned drinking water to Columbia and \$20,000 to aid flood relief efforts.

In Georgetown, a town of more than 9,100 with a poverty level of 52.3 percent greater than the state average, CAN'd Aid volunteers worked with disaster relief nonprofit All Hands Volunteers to gut homes Nov. 21 and 22 and hosted a cookout with the brewery's "Beer Can Chicken."

"We all got on a bus at 7 a.m.," said Diana Ralston of CAN'd Aid, who made the trip. The group then traveled the more than five hours to Georgetown, met with All Hands Volunteers and went off to two job sites.

The sites were homes damaged by flooding, Ralston said, and the one she and eight other volunteers worked on over the weekend was the home of Rosetta Greene. Water levels reached as high as seven feet in the home.

The mold was severe, Ralston said, and volunteers wore masks as they removed the ceiling, drywall, trim, insulation, furniture and personal belongings. Greene was there helping with her son, Nate Greene, and some of his friends, and Ralston said it was an emotional experience.

Greene's husband was a truck driver who died in an accident eight years ago, Ralston said, a story Greene shared with the volunteers while they worked at her home, leaving "not a dry eye in the bunch."

At the end of the day, when so much was piled on the side of the road, from personal belongings to furniture and clothes, volunteers sat and talked with the Greenes as a crane came and started packing up the things to be taken to the landfill. Included in the pile, "we knew that's every photograph of her late husband, every memory, every keepsake," Ralston said, adding that it was like watching somebody's life go in the truck.

The brewery employees gave up their weekend to make the trip and were all back at work Monday. It was a really great thing to do, Ralston said. Seeing how much work was needed and how much progress they were able to make, "It felt good, for sure."

Josh McKinney, who operates Oskar Blues' food truck, cooked as many as 40 beer can chickens, with potato salad, coleslaw and cornbread for volunteers from AHV, Oskar Blues, United Way, Habitat for Humanity and more, including the Greenes. Oskar Blues started out in Lyons, Colo. as a restaurant and brewpub, Ralston noted, adding that it feels good to give people food.

All Hands Volunteers has set up a temporary work base in a Georgetown church and will stay and work in the area for several months.

CAN'd Aid has raised \$1 million since it was created by Oskar Blues founder Dale Katechis in 2013. The nonprofit was originally established to aid flood victims in the brewery's hometown of Lyons, where the nonprofit first partnered with AHV. The two "share a similar grassroots approach to do-goodery," a news release about the trip says.

"As a company that's just how we're wired," Ralston said. "We've been able to grow pretty rapidly and all along we've been about helping out the community where we're based and trying to give back."

Topography, growth make dealing with flooding a challenge (Wilmington, NC, Star News)

By Adam Wagner

[Wilmington, NC, Star News](#), Nov. 24, 2015

CAROLINA SHORES -- When the Caw Caw Swamp Watershed Work Plan was created in 1964, 16.5 miles of drainage ditch were dug to protect the livelihoods of poor farmers in the area by easing routine flooding.

"The water problems of the watershed are ... direct contributing factors to the number of farmers in the extremely low income class," according to a 1964 watershed work plan agreement between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Brunswick Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Caw Caw area stretches from a spot on N.C. 130 about 4 miles northwest of Shallotte in a west-southwest direction for about 12 miles until it meets the Waccamaw River near the South Carolina line, according to the 1964 document.

At least 18 inches were dumped onto the region during the rainfalls in early October, according to Carolina Shores officials, causing heavy flooding in the area.

County commissioners want to know if they can do anything to prepare the ditches for strong rains in the future, particularly since the area has seen an influx of new building. At a Nov. 10 agenda meeting, the commissioners authorized the county to spend up to \$30,000 on an agreement with Eric Williams of HDR Engineering so he could review the status of the district and prepare a report.

"It is an issue that we're trying very much to determine what our next step is going to be, to try to find some way to resolve the issue for future impacts on our local communities," said Commissioner Randy Thompson, who represents much of the area in the Caw Caw district.

The county plans to hold a meeting to discuss what can be done in the district during January. Since taking the ditches over in the mid-2000s, the county has performed maintenance on vegetation around the ditches, but is unable to perform any action beneath the water's surface because of permitting concerns.

"Has the Caw Caw itself been maintained or has it changed in its form or has it reduced its volume to take less than it did before?" Thompson said, adding he would hope to have cooperation from a federal partner.

Finding a partner and obtaining permits could be difficult, said Larry Cahoon, a marine biologist at the University of North Carolina Wilmington who monitored water quality in the area in the 1990s. Altering the Caw Caw area, Cahoon added, could lead to heavier flooding in South Carolina.

"That's gonna be a tough permitting job," he said.

When the ditches that make up the drainage district were dug in 1964, there were about 1,000 residents in the area. According to 2013 U.S. Census estimates, Carolina Shores alone has about 3,500 residents.

The influx of residents in the area, Cahoon said, could be exacerbating the problem -- and finding a solution could be complicated because the problem is tied to the area's natural traits.

"You're wrestling with elevation, which is tough to mess with," he said. "I can't think of anything simple, it's a lot more than just a drainage problem.

"The reason those areas are wetlands is they don't drain."

Talk to your family about natural disasters (Savannah Morning News)

By Bill Herbkerman, R-Bluffton

[Savannah Morning News](#), November 25, 2015

Also in [Bluffton Today](#), Nov. 25, 2015

Even though it's almost Thanksgiving and the beginning of the holiday season, I'm going to begin the column this week with some less-than-festive comments.

I have promised that I would have more information on the aftermath of the flooding in and around Columbia and other parts of the state. My Ways and Means Subcommittee took testimony last week from the Lieutenant Governor's Council on Aging. I also had a very good personal conversation with the Director of the Department of Administration, Marcia Adams. The substance of both the testimony, and the chat with Director Adams had to do with the fact that the catastrophic flooding we experienced in the Midlands impacted a huge number of people, but none were threatened more than our older and elderly citizens.

Of the hundreds of thousands of meals served by the National Guard and local responders, most went to the elderly, many of whom had not eaten in a while. A number of the folks that needed to be relocated by the emergency services cadre were older and mostly alone and scared. While the number of the relocated was not huge, around 100 or so, it gave me a chill to imagine if the catastrophe had occurred along the coast, maybe from a hurricane or even a slow-moving tropical storm.

We are justifiably proud of the fact that our state attracts so many retirees. Our climate, our tax-friendly government, and vibrant social and artistic amenities are bringing more and more older folks and retirees to our state, and especially the coastal areas of South Carolina.

I am concerned that the recent flooding, while serious, may have been just a dress rehearsal for a more serious form of natural disaster.

We in your legislative delegation are already pushing for expedited and detailed planning for such a disaster, but we also need for you to have the necessary conversations within your families and neighborhoods as to how we all can deal with the needs of our parents, older friends and loved ones. The holidays may be about football, turkey and grandchildren, (but) let's also make it about what needs to happen if nature comes calling with an unpleasant surprise.

We were all heartened by the private response to the flooding. Beaufort and Jasper counties had no shortage of local heroes.

But if those heroes had been struggling to find food, water, and shelter for their own families, there would have been many fewer trucks headed to Columbia, Manning, and other heavily impacted areas.

Please begin the conversations with your family, with your neighbors, especially those older and perhaps more infirm neighbors and friends. Also, include in those conversations, some ideas about how to take care of beloved pets in a regional emergency. Let's talk about it now, long before the big one is coming our way.

Forgive my intruding on your holidays with our sometimes, brutal weather realities.

Believe me, it is better to talk about the storm when the sun is shining and grandchildren are laughing and running about.

Don't forget the Bluffton Art Walk. This year it is the Friday after Thanksgiving, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. in Old Town Bluffton. Not only will you see a great selection of locally made and inspired art or craft work, you might also be able to walk off that last, gratuitous piece of pumpkin pie.

The Bluffton Christmas Parade is Saturday, Dec. 5. If you have never attended, prepare for an onslaught of local color and silly fun.

, Next week, we'll remind you of upcoming holiday events in Hardeeville and Ridgeland. This time of year, our region is just one big sensory overload. Enjoy!

Bill Herbkersman, R-Bluffton, represents District 118 in the South Carolina House of Representatives. He is chairman of Jasper County's Legislative Delegation. He can be reached through his website at www.herbkersman.com or by telephone at 757-7900.

Scoppe: How much thought are you giving to giving thanks? (The State)

By Cindi Ross Scoppe

The State (Columbia), Nov. 24, 2015

Ah, Thanksgiving: Time for some food, football and family squabbles

What if we thought instead about floods and flags and a governor who became a leader when we needed one?

South Carolinians have an abundance of grace to be thankful for this year

Columbia, SC -- A FEW DAYS before he was nearly washed away in the floods, our deacon threw out a handful of examples from a six-page list of things he was thankful for: "my wife and child ... my family and friends ... knowing how to hunt and fish For knowing how to plant a garden ... to care for a lawn ... to drive a boat ... to back a trailer ... to cook a meal. For having the ability to walk and run ... to see the sunrise ... to taste the sweetness of a freshly picked peach ... to hear the roar of the ocean ... to smell a gardenia's bloom ... to know Jesus Christ."

He was challenging us to make our own lists, but my take-away was how very ordinary so many of his blessings were. I had always thought of thanksgiving as something we do for great gifts, for good health, for prayers answered. Not for simply knowing how to ... back a trailer.

I've been trying since then to add such mundane blessings to my prayers, but they keep getting crowded out by the extraordinary. By transformational gifts that I as an individual and that we as a people have been given over these past few months.

How I learned to be thankful, even through loss and violation

I'm thinking even more about these transformational blessings as we approach our national day of Thanksgiving, when we spend too much time fixating on food and football and family squabbles and too little giving thanks. Perhaps you've noticed that. Perhaps that troubles you. Perhaps now would be a good time for us all to start making our own lists, so that when Thanksgiving comes, we can be prepared to ... give thanks.

This year I am thankful that the floods didn't sweep me away; in fact didn't even come close. I am thankful that all of my friends and family survived with nothing more than the most minor of inconveniences.

I give thanks for the fact that when the floods came, we reacted with compassion, and grace. That we instinctively reached out to help our neighbors who were suffering, that we looked up from our devices and stepped outside of our self-absorbed lives and acted like we were part of a community.

After the SC flood, a week of great destruction, and greater generosity

I am thankful that at a time when our state desperately needed a leader, our governor reached within herself and found that leader, told us we would get through this and led us through it. I'm thankful that she didn't launch into tea-partisan, libertarian, populist blather about the evils of the federal government but instead went to work with that

government, and with our state government, to get the roads and bridges reopened and to get help to people who needed help. I'm thankful that she modeled servant leadership, joining her compassionate and grace-filled neighbors to personally help people clean out their flooded homes.

I am thankful for the impressive job our much-maligned Transportation Department has done getting roads and bridges back in working order.

I am thankful that after what looked initially like knee-jerk defensiveness, our new DHEC director seems to have recognized that her agency has not been doing its job protecting the public from dangerous dams — and hopeful that this recognition will inspire her to examine how well her agency is handling all the other areas where its enforcement attitude can make the difference in the public's health and safety.

I'm thankful that the Senate didn't confirm the governor's professionally unqualified and temperamentally inappropriate first choice for that post.

I am thankful that our governor found her inner leader both times our state desperately needed leadership.

I give thanks for the fact that an evil gunman did not burst in on my church and massacre my priest and fellow parishioners — and me. I give thanks that I don't have to worry that someone will shoot up my church because of the color of my skin.

I am thankful that I live in a state and a country where I can worship freely — so freely, in fact, that many people who call themselves Christians honestly believe they're being persecuted because an overpriced coffee shop doesn't put Santa figures on its red cups and because people greet them with "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas" ... during Advent. Persecuted.

The war on Advent continues

I give thanks for the awesome and inspirational grace displayed by the families of the Emanuel nine, which transformed the hearts of so many South Carolinians and turned tragedy into a great coming together for people of faith. I pray that I could display a mustard seed's worth of their faith if my life were torn by even a mustard seed's worth of the tragedy that theirs were.

I am thankful that our lawmakers finally put the Confederate flag behind us, and did so not because they had to but because they, and the people they represent, realized how much pain that symbol caused so many of our neighbors.

This Confederate flag debate is strikingly different from the ones before

Honestly, I'm not sure I ever believed that the Legislature would move that flag — much less do it in a way that brought us together rather than tearing us apart. So I am thankful that I failed to consider the power of grace — and even more thankful that it was given to us over and over again.

And even though it's been more than 30 years since I did it and I can't imagine why I would ever need to do it again, I'm thankful that I can back a trailer.

Ms. Scoppe writes editorials and columns for The State.

Fireflies open for business in the Vista (ColaDaily)

By Allen Wallace

[Columbia Daily/ColaDaily.com](http://ColumbiaDaily/ColaDaily.com), Nov. 24, 2015

The Columbia Fireflies have yet to take the field, but team management is hoping to see their merchandise under lots of Christmas trees this year.

The team hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony Tuesday for its retail store at 807 Gervais St. in the Vista.

"This is a great storefront for them," said Columbia Chamber President and CEO Carl Blackstone. "We're only about five months away from baseball. April 14 is coming soon."

The Fireflies Opening Day is scheduled for April 14.

Fireflies President John Katz said the team's lease at the Gervais store ends in March but that "for the time being, this is a pretty cool place to be. I love the Vista."

Katz said he has not yet decided whether the Vista store will stay open beyond March.

"We'll have a full store as part of the stadium," he said. "This is a great spot, but once we're up and running in the ballpark, it's not quite as necessary to have another presence."

Katz said the stadium construction is on time and under budget.

He said the Vista store opened before the ribbon cutting, just days after last month's floods, in an effort to help the community the Fireflies are joining.

"We opened specifically to be a drop-off point for the United Way and Harvest Hope," Katz said. "When we first opened we didn't have enough merchandise in the store to really be open for business."

The store is now fully stocked and ready for customers. Hours and information on what's for sale can be found here.

Commentary: We're thankful for state's spirit, resolve (Bluffton Today)

[Bluffton Today](#), November 25, 2015 -

Savannah--In many ways, it's been a trying year for South Carolina. Yet in the face of much tragedy and frustration, its people have managed to make it an inspiring one as well.

South Carolinians' remarkable resolve, cooperation and generosity give us all something to be thankful for this week. We should carry that spirit of community through the rest of the holiday season into — we hope — a brighter 2016.

On April 4, a black man fleeing a traffic stop was shot to death by a white North Charleston police officer. A cellphone video showed Michael Slager shooting Walter Scott, who was unarmed, in the back. The North Charleston Police Department fired Slager, who has been charged with murder.

Officials responded swiftly to the shooting and the community demonstrated peacefully. That stood in stark contrast to the violent protests that had followed the deaths of unarmed black men at the hands of police in other parts of the country. An arrest was quickly made and a state law requiring police to wear body cameras picked up momentum in the S.C. Legislature.

On June 17, nine people were killed when a white man opened fire in a Wednesday night Bible study at Charleston's historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church. Among them was the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, the Jasper County state senator and former pastor of Bluffton's Campbell Chapel AME Church.

The Lowcountry, the state and nation mourned. President Barack Obama delivered a stirring eulogy for Pinckney at his funeral in Charleston and an important conversation about the Confederate battle flag resumed. Dylann Roof, who has been charged in the killings, had espoused white supremacist views and posed with the flag. Lawmakers, at long last, voted to remove this symbol of division and oppression from the Statehouse grounds.

As the calendar turned to October, much of South Carolina was hit with historic amounts of rainfall. It started with flooding in Charleston and moved inland. Dams breached or failed and hundreds of roads and bridges were closed. At least 19 people were killed and the damage could cost billions of dollars.

Beaufort and Jasper counties were lucky to be spared much of the heavy rain. Many residents responded by helping their neighbors to the north. Bluffton officials and businesses held supply drives and local firefighters were deployed to help in the recovery.

The responses to these tragic events have all been inspiring in their own ways: the calls to stand together, the denunciations of hate, the outpourings of generosity. As we reflect on them during the holiday season, they should inspire us to do more in our daily lives.

After all, there are people right here in our community who need our assistance. So many local organizations and churches work hard every day to lend a hand. Let's do all we can by volunteering, donating or asking these groups what else we can do to support their missions.

South Carolinians have shown time and again they have the strength to overcome adversity and help others do the same. That's something we can demonstrate every day of the year, in good times and bad.

TV/Radio Clips

Media Alert From TVEyes Media Monitoring Suite



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[FEMA. on WFXB \(FOX\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

11/24/2015 08:01:16

Fox Morning News (News)

... the county is eligible for up to 75-percent reimbursement from FEMA. officials say the response to storm problems was fast and mostly free of complaints. ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WCIV-CHS \(ABC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/24/2015 17:08:35

ABC News 4 @ 5 (News)

... >> now we're learning the city of charleston is working with FEMA to declare the homes uninhabitable. only a abcnews4 tonight bill burr has more what this means for people forced out by record ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WCIV-CHS \(ABC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/24/2015 19:02:18

ABC News 4 @ 7 (News)

... >> victoria: we are learning the city of charleston is working with FEMA to declare their homes unlivable. only on abc news 4, bill burr has what this means for the people for stop by record ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA. on WCIV-CHS \(ABC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/24/2015 19:04:04

ABC News 4 @ 7 (News)

... the next six months, nine months, or 12 months, while FEMA makes those determinations. for that reason, i said let's go ahead and try to get your life back to normal as quickly ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WLTX - COL \(CBS\) - Columbia, SC](#)

11/24/2015 21:10:29

NCIS: New Orleans (Other)

... what'd you end up doing? cried. laughed. graffitied anti-FEMA slogans on refrigerators, you know. is this the victim's shirt? it is. you find something? ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WACH - COL \(FOX\) - Columbia, SC](#)

11/24/2015 22:07:42

WACH FOX News at 10 (News)

... >>> flood victims have more than a week to apply for financial assistance from FEMA. you can apply by calling the number on your screen. you can also complete the process online.>>> one family ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA. on WBTW \(CBS\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

11/24/2015 23:08:54

News 13 at 11 (News)

... johnsonville, taylor herlong, news13. FEMA provided assistance to 87- thousand people in south carolina so far. nearly 37-hundred people in ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[F-E-M-A on WCIV-CHS \(ABC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/25/2015 05:06:43

Good Morning Charleston (News)

... 4 has learned charleston city officials are asking f-e-m-a to declare the community unliveableso the government can buyout property owners. city leaders admit its too expensive to fix the flooding ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WBTW \(CBS\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

11/25/2015 05:26:34

News 13 First Morning (News)

... holidays. instead, thanks to some help from FEMA, the two moved into their brand new home this week. creel says he is thankful to have somewhere to go with his ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WCBD-CHS \(NBC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/25/2015 05:36:44

News 2 Today (News)

... after getting the idea from a private facebook group that voted to FEMA meteorologist dozens of the professional weather reporters have all purchased and worn this one particular dress while ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WCIV-CHS \(ABC\) - Charleston, SC](#)

11/25/2015 06:07:49

Good Morning Charleston (News)

... after flood waters washed away her first floor. they are asking FEMA to declare it unlivable. they admit it is too expensive to fix the flooding problem. >> we have lobbied FEMA to ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WACH - COL \(FOX\) - Columbia, SC](#)

11/25/2015 06:09:08

WACH Fox Good Day (News)

... for flood victims in the state to apply for financial assistance from FEMA. that's december 4th. you can apply by calling the number on your screen. >>> as the temperatures start ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA on WBTW \(CBS\) - Myrtle Beach, SC](#)

11/25/2015 06:25:26

News 13 This Morning (News)

... holidays. instead, thanks to some help from FEMA, the two moved into their brand new home this week. creel says he is thankful to have somewhere to go with his ...



(click thumbnail to play)

[FEMA. on WACH - COL \(FOX\) - Columbia, SC](#)

11/25/2015 07:07:37

WACH Fox Good Day (News)

... for flood victims in the state to apply for financial assistance from FEMA. that's december 4th. you can apply by calling the number on your screen. >>> you want to be safe while ...