



- Sheriff's Dept. photo

Fog factor in head-on crash below Parksville

The holidays were relatively quiet for the McCormick County Sheriff's Office with the exception of one major auto accident. Dense fog on the morning of Monday, Dec. 27 was a factor in a head-on vehicle accident on highway 28 south just south of Parksville. One passenger was transported to an Augusta hospital for treatment. "Miraculously, no one was killed," said Sheriff Clarke Stearns. "The SC Highway Patrol was called to work the wreck. One passenger was in each vehicle, seat belts were worn and airbags deployed."

-Reported by Bob Stockton

More traffic stops lead to more serious charges

By Bob Stockton

The trend of traffic stops (two for no tag lights and two for speeding) leading to more serious charges (marijuana, methamphetamine, outstanding warrant) continued during the holiday season.

Deputies initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle with no tag lights near the intersection of highway 28 south and Hopewell Church Road. They identified the driver, noted the smell of marijuana and asked the driver if she had anything illegal in the vehicle. She stated, "No."

The driver was asked to step out of the vehicle and permission was obtained to search the vehicle. During a pat down search for weapons, deputies located a meth pipe and a clear plastic baggy containing marijuana.

The vehicle was searched, and deputies located two burnt rolled cigars containing marijuana inside of the vehicle. The driver was arrested and transported to the detention center for booking and processing.

Deputies initiated a traffic stop for no tag lights on Chestnut Ridge Road at the intersection of Calhoun Street. Deputies identified the driver and passenger and the odor of marijuana coming from the vehicle.

Deputies ran the driver's information through dispatch which returned clear. The passenger's information was run through dispatch which returned that she did not have a driver's license.

Deputies asked the driver if there was any marijuana in the vehicle, and he stated, "No." Deputies informed both driver and passenger they could smell marijuana and had them step out of the vehicle.

The vehicle was searched, and deputies located multiple small burnt rolled cigars containing marijuana in the ash tray. As they continued to search, they located a backpack containing a scale, a large baggy and a clear glass jar containing marijuana.

The driver was arrested for distribution of marijuana and was transported to the detention center for booking and processing. A friend who had been called arrived on the scene to take possession of the vehicle.

Deputies initiated a traffic stop for speeding 74 miles per hour in a 40 mph speed zone near the Dollar General on highway 28 south. As deputies interviewed the driver, they noted the smell of marijuana coming from the vehicle.

They asked the driver if there

were any drugs in the vehicle, and a passenger stated he had "weed" in his possession. Deputies had the occupants step out of the vehicle, and the truck was searched.

Deputies located a medium sized freezer bag containing eight grams of marijuana which was seized, and the passenger was written a citation for simple possession of marijuana. The driver was cited for speeding.

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Deputies initiated a traffic stop for speeding 73 miles per hour in a 35 mph speed zone at the intersection of highway 28 north and Cedar Hill Road. They approached the driver, identified him and ran his information through dispatch which confirmed he had an outstanding active warrant of out Spartanburg.

The Spartanburg Sheriff's Office indicated it wanted the subject detained for them to pick up. The driver was arrested on the Spartanburg warrant and transported to the detention center to await pick up. His truck was released to a passenger who was confirmed to have a valid driver's license.

Sheriff's deputies also responded to the Cherry Street Apartments to back up Town of McCormick Police Officers in reference to a shooting. Dispatch reported a male subject had been shot.

Deputies recovered a gun from a suspect who indicated to them she had shot the victim when he choked her. The gun was secured, bagged as evidence, and deputies performed crowd control functions as the Town Police worked the incident. The gun was eventually turned over to the Town Police as the scene was cleared.

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- Thursday, January 6, 1:00 p.m. at the McCormick Chamber of Commerce
- Monday, January 10, 4:00 p.m. at the McCormick Chamber of Commerce
- Tuesday, January 11, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) at the McCormick County Library
- Saturday, January 15, 1:00 p.m. at the Parksville Town Hall
- Monday, January 17, 1:00 p.m. at the Lutheran Church By The Lake
- Thursday, January 20, 7:00 p.m. at the Mims Community Center, Willington

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Four leadership goals for the new year

By Richard Eckstrom
S.C. Comptroller

We all have room to improve, and there's something about a new, blank calendar that motivates us to do so. That's why many of us recently made resolutions to better ourselves in some way – perhaps to exercise more or kick a bad habit.

For those of us in positions of public leadership a new year is a chance to reflect on how we can better serve the people. Here are four worthy resolutions – leadership goals for the new year – that public officials at all levels would do well to adopt:

- Be an advocate for transparency. Transparency improves the quality of government. It helps prevent abuse, makes problems easier to catch, and builds public trust.

Make sure it's as easy as possible for people to see how their tax dollars are spent, how decisions are made, and how their government operates. Make sure people have easy access to detailed, itemized spending information. Hold discussions about important issues in public view, rather than behind closed doors. Ensure annual financial reports are published in a timely manner, and that information requests from citizens are answered promptly (and preferably free of charge.)

- Respect the citizen watchdogs. Just about every public entity has one – the citizen who attends every meeting, asks tough questions, requests information using open-records laws, and generally makes public officials' lives a little less comfortable.

To politicians, these citizen watchdogs can be a pain. But they're



Richard Eckstrom

vital to good government. They hold politicians to account and provide needed oversight. And their persistent efforts occasionally unearth very real problems – such as water contamination, misspending, even corruption.

Unfortunately, these watchdogs sometimes find themselves in the crosshairs of their own government. That's a shame. Citizens who take the time to become personally involved and engage in their government – even those who ask tough questions – deserve respect. They help make the system cleaner and healthier, which in turn makes their community stronger.

- Set an example of civility. It seems like a quaint notion in today's climate, but there's much to be said for civil debate. That's how you persuade others to your point of view, after all. Those who believe in the strength of their positions shouldn't fear a polite, reasoned exchange of viewpoints.

Leaders who commit to taking the high road will serve the public

well. For those aspiring to elected office, keeping their campaigns positive and issue-oriented would be a good start. Positive campaigns help people make informed decisions and set the right example for constituents.

- Remember whose money it is. The power to spend citizens' money isn't to be taken lightly. People work hard for their paycheck, and many feel squeezed by their collective local, state and federal tax burden.

Unfortunately, one of the hallmarks of the public sector is its casual attitude toward the spending of taxpayer dollars. They seem to forget whose money they're spending. And our wallets are a little lighter as a result.

We could use more people in office who understand that it's the people's money, not theirs, and that dealing in taxpayer dollars calls for a high standard of stewardship. It calls for discretion, careful prioritization, and adequate oversight. Restraint is a virtue. Spending should be done in an open, deliberative process and with stringent safeguards against waste and abuse. And tax increases should always be a last resort, after belts have been tightened.

After all, every dollar we pull from someone's pockets is a dollar they won't have to pay bills, send a kid to college, take a vacation or save for retirement.

I wish you and yours much happiness, good health and success in 2022.

Richard Eckstrom is a CPA and the state Comptroller. He's president of the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers.

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Birthdays/Wedding Anniversaries

Congratulations and best wishes to the following persons who celebrate birthdays and wedding anniversaries this week.

January 7 - Vera Robertson, Ronnie Smith, Naomi Andrews, Benji Garrett, Pamela Thomas, Edwin Lumpkin, Joe Slone, Herbert Wiggleton, Shaquetta Robertson, Barbara Hoffman, Bennett McCarron.

January 8 - Carrie B. Adams, Frances Corley, Mike Stribling, Martha Mueller, Lateidrya Mims, Thomasa Rodgers, Candace Lester, Henry and Nina Young, Tracy Jester.

January 9 - Anissa Ann Parker, Zim Cannon, Alicia Mims, Janet and Scott Wilkins, Barb Barritt, Bob Rennie, Wanda Rogers, Nicholas Bowick.

January 10 - Daniel Lewis Dukes, Susan W. Buck, Michael Cochrane, Lou Lee, Jan Panka, Sue Lundy, Jerry and Barb Berton, Barnaryous Drennon, Shedrick Williams II.

January 11 - Paul E. Brown, Cheree Dorn, Dick Parks, Josh Houston, Miles Martin, Joseph Boyce, Miles Sibert, Kevin Sanders, Aubrey Guiney, Gayle Sheffield.

January 12 - Chris Bundrick, Jean Moore, Clem Smith, Mari-Clare DoByns, Shameaka Ervin, Lt. Will Crady, Nathan Timok, Shirley Stiers.

January 13 - Cheryl D. Pennington, Dusty Newby, Martha Perrin, Na'Toya Leverette, Kathryn Perrin, William D. Willis, Darren Keith Upshur, Mr. and Mrs. Ricky Creswell, Nick Rocheleau, Sheri Leslie.

Literacy Association

If you need help with resumes or information on resume building and copying for the upcoming job fairs, call the McCormick County Literacy Association at 864-852-3172 for an appointment.

American Legion

McCormick American Legion Post #19 is now open for event rentals. For booking information, contact James Burt at 864-391-7421 or Mat Hardy at 864-602-0256.

AA Meetings

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) is now meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1319 S. Main Street, Talmadge building.

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Books by Bobby F. Edmonds

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 The Huguenots of New Bordeaux \$20.00	 McCormick County Land of Cotton \$30.00	 George McDuffie: Southern Orator \$20.00	 Gold, Gems and Artifacts Prospecting \$10.00	 McCormick County Cemeteries \$25.00
 Growing up Southern \$20.00	 The British Partizan \$12.00	 A Culture Lost to Thurmond Lake \$25.00	 Building Railroads \$25.00	 Echoes from Bygone Days \$25.00

Books may be purchased at the McCormick Messenger, Willington Book Store, Strom's Drug Store, Chamber of Commerce and Books on Main