Creating Community through people, parks, and programs





2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



OURMission

The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission exists to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of the District through the development of recreational programs that promote a lifestyle of wellness, physical activity, and cultural experiences for all ages.

Our Vision

Powered by innovation, enthusiasm, and teamwork, guided by integrity, we help our community live healthy, satisfying lives.

Our Values Integrity, Respect, Excellence, Service, Enjoyment, and Fun.

LETTER FROM THE EXecutive Director

"Parks are a tangible reflection of the quality of life in a community. They provide identity for citizens and are a major factor in the perception of quality of life in a given community. Parks and recreation services are often cited as one of the most important factors in surveys of how livable communities are. "Why Parks and Recreation are Essential Public Services, National Recreation and Park Association.

Dear Friends,

This report encapsulates the achievements, partnerships, and milestones experienced throughout the year and reflects the dedication and hard work of our team in maintaining the high standards of our agency. The past year has been remarkable for the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission, as we have witnessed continued growth in our overall participation, reaffirming the importance and popularity of the services we offer to the community. Despite the daily challenges posed from weather, schedules, and funding, our team's commitment and perseverance have enabled us to achieve another record-breaking year, demonstrating our unwavering dedication to excellence.

Great partners...

We have the best partners...truly. We have so many great partnerships that we have formed over the years, and we are so blessed to have them. With confidence, I can say that our continued success is largely due to our ability to form lasting, win-win relationships with partners that have opened so many great opportunities for our community to enjoy. I am very thankful to have these relationships and can celebrate that we have so many great people and organizations in our community.

Looking ahead...

There is a lot of planning either in progress or kicking off in this coming year. I am very excited to re-engage with our community as we navigate through those processes. It is always critical to ensure we're moving in step with the desires of our community. Quality of life continues to take significant steps forward in priority as a measurement tool of a successful community. We are seeing this focus more and more, which means our strategic efforts to ensure we're keeping our fingers on the pulse of the community is evermore critical. There will be opportunities for every member of our community, over the next year, to help us in these planning efforts, so please be on the lookout for them. We will need your help!

I am honored to share this annual report with the relevant government leaders, stakeholders, and the general public. We hope that it provides a comprehensive overview of our accomplishments and future endeavors as a thriving parks and recreation agency. Thank you for your continued support.

Best regards,

Mark A. Smyers Executive Director, Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission



ICRC Parks

Crooked Creek Park 1098 Old Lexington Highway Chapin, SC 29036, 803-345-6181

Melvin Park 370A Eptings Camp Road Chapin, SC 29036, 803-345-8113

Michael J. & Mary Meech Mungo Park

2121 Lake Murray Boulevard Columbia, SC 29212, 803-772-1228

Saluda Shoals Park 5605 Bush River Road Columbia, SC 29212, 803-772-1228

Seven Oaks Park 200 Leisure Lane Columbia, SC 29210, 803-772-3336

In 2023-24, ICRC's five parks have had more than 2.3 million visitors.

ABOUTICRC

The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission (ICRC) is a special purpose district formed in 1969 to serve community members living in the Lexington County portion of Lexington-Richland School District five.

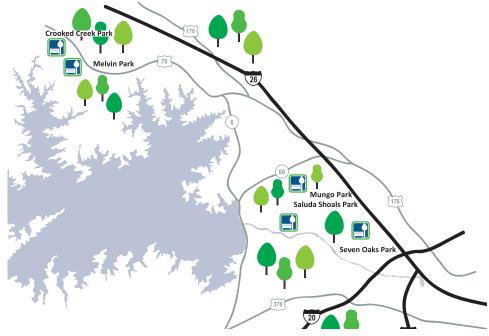
Five Commissioners, appointed by the Governor of the State of South Carolina, are responsible for policy making decisions and goal setting for future development of the agency.

Commissioners

William H. Harmon, Chairman Michael C. Cromer, Vice-Chairman Akil E. Ross, Ph.D., Secretary Laura H. Huggins Gerrick J. Hampton, Ed.D

ICRC currently operates five signature parks which provide an array of recreational opportunities for youth, teens, adults, seniors, and individuals with cognitive, physical, and emotional disabilities.

Programming and special events offered by ICRC throughout the year are centered within the parks. Over the years, ICRC has earned a reputation for program and facility excellence that has attracted participants from surrounding counties. This positively impacts the financial position of the agency as user fees support a majority of ICRC's operational budget.



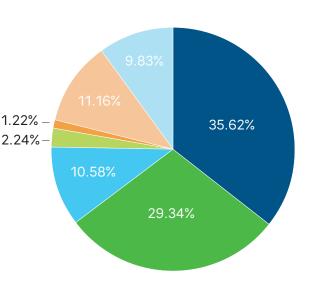
YOUR DOLLARS At Work General & Special Revenue Funds

Only 38.59% of the funding that supports the operation of ICRC parks comes from tax dollars.

The remainder of the operating budget comes from fees for programs, services, and special events, contributions, grants, and interest income.

To help offset limited budgets, ICRC pursues grant opportunities to provide additional funding for facilities and programs. ICRC successfully secured grants from LWCF, PARD, and CDBG, as well as a corporate grant from Dominion Energy.

This funding allows the agency to improve facilities and add additional amenities to our parks without impacting district tax payers.

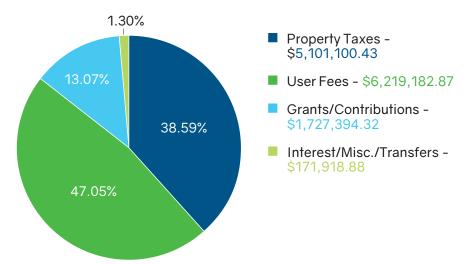


Where funding goes

- Park Operations/Maintenance-\$4,709,478.65
- Recreational Programming -\$3,878,861.37
- After School Programs -\$1,398,335.92
- Senior Services -\$296,453.82
- Therapeutic Recreation Services - \$161,466.74
- Transfer to Reserve Fund -1,475,000.00

Land Donation - 1,300,000.00

Where funding comes from*



PARK & FACILITY Improvements

Planning:

- Lower Saluda Greenway Trail design and permitting in progress.
- Environmental Center Phase I Grant process underway.

Saluda Shoals Park

- Completed Holiday Light prep, setup, and teardown.
- Replaced an HVAC unit at Administration Building.
- Repaired roofs at the Environmental Center and River Center.
- Ran temporary power and rerouted electrical supply for special events.
- Top-dressed the clay tennis courts and replaced netting.
- Replaced the ice machine at Environmental Center.
- Shifted east gate entry to a temporary gate house while a new gate house is being built.
- Replaced asphalt in critical areas around the park.
- Conducted infusion well testing for ground water quality (AECOM and DHEC).
- Repaired pond irrigation pump and replaced water spray in east entrance pond.
- Replaced the lift station at the Cattail shelter.
- Installed a well in the Wetland Preserve.
- Repaired pedestrian bridge on the east side of the park.
- Replaced damaged gate at east side park entrance.
- Completed Splash Pad improvements including construction of new picnic shelter.
- Installed a grill and water faucet and replaced the storm drain line at Sycamore shelter.
- Completed River Overlook stabilization.
- Resurfaced the front entrance bridge and completed decking repairs on east side bridge.
- Had playgrounds CPSI inspected and repaired.
- Completed repairs to Environmental Center back deck.
- Installed a gutter system on the tennis building.

Seven Oaks Park

- Cleaned and refinished floors throughout the building.
- Replaced HVAC unit in Recreation Center.
- Added window tinting throughout facility.
- Completed indoor facility painting.
- Re-striped the parking lot.
- Added facility signage.
- Completed embankment and walkway improvements and sidewalk repairs throughout park.
- Replaced outside waste receptacles.
- Had playgrounds CPSI inspected and repaired.

Melvin Park

- Began work on Racquet Court expansion.
- Installed concrete steps next to dugouts fields one through four.
- Repaired the pond/pump irrigation system.
- Repaired and made improvements to the retention pond.

Crooked Creek Park

- Cleaned out Old Town Hall shop and constructed sets for the theatre program.
- Installed lighting in soft parking lot.
- Refinished gym floors.
- Had playgrounds CPSI inspected and repaired.
- Repaired dugout roofs at Chapin Elementary School.
- Completed asphalt roadway repairs.

Mungo Park

- Added patio furniture to the patio and deck at Meech House.
- Replaced ice machine at the Meech House.
- Tinted windows at the Meech House.
- Upgraded to LED lights with dimmers in Magnolia Room at the Meech House.
- Cleaned out septic tank and grease pit.
- Pressure washed all concrete areas and deck.
- Built a partition on the patio at the Meech House to hide catering kitchen entrance from rentals.

Melvin Park Tennis/Pickleball Project















Operating more than 817 acres of parkland!







46,797 Meta/Instagram followers

CROOKED CREEK PARK

Park Visits	590,132
Class Participants	4,382
Special Event Participants	11,673
Senior Program Participants	4,358
Athletic Program Participants	2,938
Fitness Passes	3,380
Camp Participants	3,656
Volunteer Hours	16,384
After School Participants	15,815
Facility Rental Reservations	735

MELVIN PARK

Park Visits	151,737
Class Participants	1,116
Special Event Participants	45,744
Splash Pad Participants	4,608
Court Passes	230
Camp Participants	101
Facility Rental Reservations	154

MUNGO PARK

Park Visits 118,905 Facility Rental Reservations 116

ATHLETICS/FIELDS

21 baseball fields

15 multiuse fields





2 football fields



1 pickleball co

SALUDA SHOALS PARK

Park Visits	882,762
Education Class Participants	5,823
Special Event Participants	225,947
Saluda Splash Participants	12,273
Park Program Participants	42,680
Annual Park Passes	4,015
Court Passes	78
Camp Participants	568
Volunteer Hours	832
Facility Rental Reservations	5,147

SEVEN OAKS PARK

ATHLETIC

PARTICIPATION BY SPORT

206

159

86

76

537

640,740
1,680
87,512
15,293
2,417
1,352
4,509
24,901
13,884
1,229

,627

972

547



2023-24 Highlights

Afterschool Programs

The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission (ICRC) offered quality after-school programs to an average of 739 children per day.

Therapeutic Recreation

ICRC offers programs for children and adults with special needs and considerations. Our purpose is to provide recreational and skill building opportunities that enhance socio-emotional development and self-confidence. We provide an adaptive and inclusive environment that enhances participant's independence. ICRC continued to offer after-school programs to *an average of 30 individuals per week*, and *140 summer campers*. ICRC was awarded *\$85,311 in grant funding* for the district-wide after-school program and *\$18,616* for its new adult enrichment day programming.

Summer Camps

Summer Safari day camps at Crooked Creek Park and Seven Oaks Park served *364 children* each week for ten weeks. Extreme Safari, a day camp for ages 11–14, served *50 children* weekly. Additionally, ICRC offered *176 specialty camps* for children of all ages and interests at our parks.

Children's Theatre

ICRC's Children's Theatre program hosted four live performances in 2023-24. A total of *124 children* participated in the program, performing to *2,898 audience members*.

Health and Wellness

Health and wellness programs at Crooked Creek Park and Seven Oaks Park offer wellequipped fitness centers, a variety of classes, and indoor walking tracks.

Senior Services

ICRC serves as the area's Council on Aging, making Crooked Creek Park and Seven Oaks Park key providers of senior services in the community. Support services include: Mealson-Wheels, group dining sites, transportation, health and wellness programs and more. ICRC *served 17,835 meals to seniors this year.* The agency received generous *donations of \$48,805* from the community in support of the Meals-on-Wheels program.

Athletics

ICRC had *5,355 participants* in our youth and adult athletic leagues which included: lacrosse, softball, football, flag football, cheer, soccer, indoor soccer, cross country, track, baseball, basketball, volleyball, and golf.

Market Development Tournaments and Events

During FY 2023-2024, ICRC hosted *57 sports tourism events* headlined by the Columbia Volleyball Club the "Clash." Additional events included 5Ks, fun runs, baseball, softball,

lacrosse, and flag football tournaments. These events *brought 149,767 visitors* to ICRC facilities with an estimated *economic impact* of \$3,526,203.

Environmental Education Programs

Environmental Education Programs which address national and South Carolina education science standards are offered to schools throughout the region. These programs offer students hands-on experience learning about plants, animals, and the environment. Each program consists of a short lesson, an opportunity to handle various preserved plant and animal specimens, and a nature walk. *More than 5,823 children* participated in environmental education programs at Saluda Shoals Park.



Environmental Stewardship

Protecting and enhancing our resources is vital throughout the District and ICRC contributes in several ways. This year, through a grant from Dominion Energy, Saluda Shoals Park completed important restoration work including removing invasive privet, planting native species, completing bank restoration, and digging a well to improve the Wetland Preserve located in the park. The Wetland Preserve is home to many species of plant and animals and serves as an environmental education classroom for thousands of school children each year. The parks also recycle all paper and plastic waste and Crooked Creek Park participates in Chapin Community Service Day annually.

Special Events

ICRC offers a variety of special events each year, which attracted *more than 370,800 people* to our parks. Events include: Astronomy nights, athletic tournaments, Backyard Saturday, Bowl Day, Candy Cane Hunt, Cooking with Santa, cross country and track meets, Daddy Daughter Dance, EGG-cessible Egg Hunt, Fall Craft Market, Flashlight Egg Hunt, Indoor Yard Sales, Halloween at the Park, Halloween at Saluda Shoals Park, Holiday Lights on the River, Holiday Market, Howl-O-Ween at the Bark, Kite Day, Lower Saluda Craft Beer & WineFest, Opening Day, Outdoor Movie Night, Paddle and Pint, Pickin' & Piggin' BBQ Cookoff, Preschool and Special Friends Egg Hunt, Saluda Shoals Egg Hunt, Saluda Shoals Jazz Series and Music Series, Santa's Market Craft Show, Shuckin' on the Shoals, Sleigh Bell Trot and Stroll, Slip, Slide & Splash, Spring Market, Soggy Doggy Day, Sunset on the Shoals, Touch-a-Truck, and Winter Wine at Holiday Lights.

Meetings and Rentals

ICRC offers many opportunities to gather at our parks for both business and social functions. Crooked Creek Park, Melvin Park, Saluda Shoals Park, and Seven Oaks Park offer picnic shelters as well as indoor meeting rooms. For larger meetings, weddings, and events, the River Center at Saluda Shoals Park and the Meech House at Mungo Park offer elegant spaces to gather. ICRC had *7,381 indoor and outdoor facility rentals* this year *generating \$1,000,000 in operating revenue* for the agency.

Partnerships

By combining the potential of both the public and private sectors, partnerships enhance our ability to deliver on goals, strengthen ties to a more livable community, and maximize often limited resources.

2023-2024 Partnerships

AFC Midlands Chapter • Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC • Central League Adult Soccer • Chapin Baptist Church • Chapin Sunrise Rotary Club • Chapin Woman's Club • Chef's Association • Coca-Cola • Dick's Sporting Goods • Dominion Energy • Experience Columbia • Hampton Inn-Harbison on the Lake • Irmo Chamber of Commerce • Juvenile Arbitration • Keep the Midlands Beautiful • Lake Murray DJs and Videography • Lake Murray-Irmo Rotary Club • Leo's Pride Foundation • Lexington County Community Development • Lexington County Recreation and Aging • Lexington County Sheriff's Department • Lexington Medical Center • Lexington-Richland School District Five • Michael J. Mungo Foundation • Midlands Technical College – Harbison Theatre • Palmetto Smiles • Seacoast Church • St. Andrews-Irmo Optimist Club • St. Francis of Assissi Episcopal Church, Chapin • University of South Carolina • USA Football • Windham Services. ICRC's largest annual special event, Holiday Lights on the River, was held November 22nd through December 31st.

Revenue generated from this event is necessary for the operational support of Saluda Shoals Park.

More than 110,700 people made Holiday Lights part of their family traditions and the event had an estimated \$3 million dollar economic impact on our community.





SALUDA SHOALS FOUNDATION

Since 1997, the Saluda Shoals Foundation has supported Saluda Shoals Park. The Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization committed to serving as a steward of the park through financial support and as an advocate for the preservation and sustainability of the park's programs and the environment. The community gives generously each year during the Foundation's annual campaign and other fundraising events. Fundraising efforts in FY 23-24 brought in more than \$378,000.

- Individuals and companies gave more than \$87,000.
- The annual Shuckin' on the Shoals Oyster Roast fundraiser grossed more than \$30,000 from sponsorships, ticket sales, and raffle sales.
- Dominion Energy awarded a \$37,600 grant to support environmental education programs and to upgrade the wetland area with a new well, replace invasive plants with natives, and also supported a new family health initiative to the park, called TRACK Trails, with a \$19,700 grant.
- The CW and Dorothy G. Love Foundation awarded a \$20,000 grant in support of Public Art projects at the park.
- Leo's Pride donated \$30,000 in support of expansion and upgrades to the Therapeutic Recreation facilities at Seven Oaks Park.

Generous donor gifts supported park programs and events including the following:

- An evening at Holiday Lights on the River for more than 200 Ft. Jackson soldiers.
- Park programs and events including Backyard Saturday, Lower Saluda Craft Beer & Winefest, Holiday Lights on the River, Egg-Cessible Egg Hunt, Pickin' & Piggin' BBQ Cookoff, fall and spring Music Series, Special Olympics Tennis team practices and numerous paddle programs.

Public Art

The Saluda Shoals Foundation Public Art Committee began planning two major art installations for the coming year. The first will incorporate the water mains along the newly widened trail to feature unique murals that reflect nature-inspired themes. The second will bring back our old friends from the wetland, the hanging fish by artist Mike Williams, to a new prominent location with a creative display.

Environmental Education Center Renovation Project

Constructed in 2001, the Environmental Education Center features a unique architectural design, and its educational offerings and amenities were developed as a part of Saluda Shoals Park's original Master Plan. The Education Center has served a vital role over the years, but the building now requires infrastructure repairs and has become underutilized in meeting the future vision of Saluda Shoals Park. ICRC and the Saluda Shoals Foundation plan to renovate and upgrade the Education Center, establishing the facility as a Visitor Center along the planned expansion of the Lower Saluda Greenway Trail.

The planned expansion of the Greenway Trail will connect the Lake Murray Dam Walkway to the Saluda Riverwalk utilizing the riverfront trails within Saluda Shoals Park. Bikers, hikers,

and park visitors will be able to enter the park from either direction. The Environmental Center is the only public facility currently on the trail and, once renovations are complete, could act as a meeting place, hub, destination, trailhead, and rest area for trail users. Renovations and updates to the Environmental Center may include the following:

- Expansion of the outdoor deck for education and events.
- Converting the existing auditorium into the building's main entrance.
- Adding additional ADA accessible restrooms to support large gatherings.
- Adding a bistro and concession area for visitors to enjoy.

The Environmental Center project will be developed in phases based on funding secured through grants and fundraising activities.

A SPECIAL Thanks

The Saluda Shoals Foundation Board of Directors would like to thank all donors who aave so generously this year.

Saluda Shoals Foundation Individual Giving

Park Partners (\$1,500+)

Dr. and Mrs. Lynn Campbell Dr. and Mrs. Richard Cross Mr. and Mrs. John Farley Mr. and Mrs. William "Bill" Long Ms. Merlee Ann Madren Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Mungo Dr. and Mrs. Wendel Nixon Dr. Ronald Rhames Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Walker

River Partner (\$1,000) Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Addison Mr. and Mrs. Rick Calhoun Mr. and Mrs. Troy Coward Mr. and Mrs. Henry "Gene" Delk Mr. David Ehler and Ms. Donna Dell Mrs. Jean Eng Dr. and Mrs. Carey Hite Laura and Keith Huggins Mr. William Westerkam and Ms. Kirsten Lackstrom Mr. and Mrs. Alan Leichtle Dr. and Mrs. D. W. Rusty Newton

Wetland Partner (\$500)

Mr. and Mrs. Lee Ayers Mr. Roy Covington Mr. and Mrs. Michael Crapps Mr. and Mrs. Rob Davis Mrs. Gaye Fann Mr. and Mrs. John Garrison Mrs. Allison Popp Ms. Cheryl Holland and Mr. Douglas Quackenbush Mr. Curt Rone Mr. and Mrs. Terry Schmoyer Mrs. Valorie Songer Dr. and Mrs. Marsh Willis

Forest Partner (\$250) Mrs. Clare Allen Mr. and Mrs. Carroll Amick Mr. Nevin Boal Dr. and Mrs. Bill Brearley Mr. and Mrs. James Marty Bridges Ms. Judy Clark Mr. and Mrs. C. Douglas Clary Mr. and Mrs. Paul Clifton Mr. and Mrs. Luther Cranford Mr. Sharon and Robert Croissant Mr. and Mrs. Michael Cromer Mr. and Mrs. Greg Downs Ms. Robin Brown and Mr. Frank Finch Mr. and Mrs. Roger Fischer Mr. and Mrs. Roger Fischer Mr. and Mrs. Rod Funderburk Mr. James Jeffers Mr. and Mrs. Larry Jones Mr. and Mrs. Robert A. Leichtle Ms. Michele Lyerly Mr. and Mrs. Steve Mann Ms. Jill Areheart and Mr. Keith Marsh Mr. and Mrs. William McLellan Dr. and Mrs. Julian Minghi

Mr. and Mrs. Jason O'Quinn Mr. Brian Pengra Dr. and Mrs. Eddie Robinson Mr. and Mrs. Mark Smyers Mr. and Mrs. Christian Soura Ms. Ann White Dr. and Mrs. Scott Wietecha

Trail Partner (\$100)

Mrs. Sharon Albertson Mr. Joseph Anthony Mr. and Mrs. Peter Balbach Captain (USN Ret.) Jeff Baldwin Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Beard Violet and Steve Bollo Mr. Reggie Boozer Ms. Ann Bosak Ms. Brantley Brinkley Dr. Patrick Brown Mr. and Mrs. Jim Butler Mr. and Mrs. Ron Byars Mrs. Eileen Carmody Mrs. Sahara Cochenour Mrs. Amy Conley Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Corbett Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Coulter Mr. Jacob Crawford Mr. and Mrs. Tony Cromer Mr. and Mrs. Charles De Krafft Ms. Amanda DeQuattro Mr. and Mrs. Mike DeHart Mr. and Mrs. Carl Derrick Mrs. Josie Derrick Mr. and Mrs. Byron Dickson Mr. Frank Douglass Mr. Chase Francis Mr. and Mrs. Mark Fryer Mr. and Mrs. Charles Garren Mrs. Carolyn Gibson Mr. Robert Gohean Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Grosse Mr. Patrick Handel Ms. Gwen Harden Mr. and Mrs. Bill Harmon Mr. and Mrs. Gene Hartsell Kim and Bernard Hawkins Mr. and Mrs. Warren Hoffman Mr. and Mrs. Gary Hogue Ms. April Hurley Ms. Melinda Hydrick Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ido Laura and Robert R. Jackson Ms. Carla Jaynes Mrs. Vivian Jefferson Mr. Charles Jordan Ms. Lisa Keller Mr. James Kleckley Ms. Jennifer LaMotta Mr. Daniel Marchman Mr. Derek Mart Mr. Henry Martin Doctors Elizabeth and William Mathias Mr. and Mrs. Christopher McKinney Mr. and Mrs. Brad McLane Ms. Dianne McLean Mr. Ryan Mullarkey Mr. Jesse Near Michael and Jenny Nehrbauer Mr. Jeff Nuovo Mrs. Betty Park Mrs. Dianne Parker Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Peckler Mr. Chris Poore Mr. Michael Randall Mrs. Kelly Riley

Mr. Jason Rogers Mr. and Mrs. Jay Seward Ms. Margie Shelburg Mr. Randy Sheldon Mr. Andry Sneldon Mrs. Spring Slagle Mr. and Mrs. Tim Smith Mrs. Andrea Snelgrove Mr. and Mrs. Walter Stanton Mr. and Mrs. John Stickney Mr. and Mrs. Pat Sullivan Mrs. Don Taylor Mr. Nelson Thompson Mr. and Mrs. David Wells Mrs. Rose Wilkins Mr. and Mrs. Richard Woodward

Corporate/Foundation Giving

Environmental Partners (\$5,000+)

Lexington Medical Center Michelin Murdock Insurance Group Palmetto Citizens Federal Credit Union Shaw Industries

River Partners (\$1,000+)

Columbia Printing and Graphics, Inc. First Community Bank Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative On Call Plumbing, Heating & Air Southeastern Freight Lines

Wetland Partners (\$500+)

Dominion Energy Kenneth B. Simmons Associates Schmoyer and Company, LLC

Forest Partners (\$250+)

Capital Kitchen & Bath Central Carolina Community Foundation D&T Steel Dupre Catering Liberty Tax Service (St. Andrew's) Mathias Sandwich Shop Midlands Family Chiropractic Shady Grove Construction State Farm - Terri Brock Agency W. P. Law, Inc. Zion Holdings LLC

Honorariums and Memorials

In Honor Of: Paula and Carey Hite Fred B. Johnston Ozzie Nagler Cynthia Robinson Elizabeth Taylor

In Memory of: Butters Joseph B. Cross Don Eng Coralee Harris George W. Jefferson Ron McCathern Rachel McKinney Prince Rogers Nelson Harold F. Park Laura Riley Al Whitworth Lee Ellett Wolfe

















