

# THE PALMETTO PLANNER



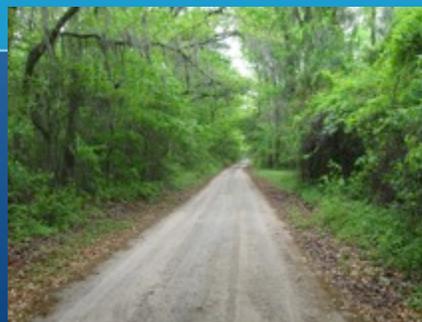
American Planning Association  
South Carolina Chapter  
Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the South Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association

## Agricultural Preservation

*Preserving our farms, protecting our future*

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## President's Message

### APA President was highlight of Summer Conference

Those of you who attended SCAPA's Summer Conference in Lexington on July 25th can say that you certainly got your money's worth!

The keynote speaker was APA President, Mitchell Silver, who inspired and informed all attendees with his eloquent message on "The Value of Planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Mitch's message underscored the recent APA Report on Planning in America, which indicates that significant opportunity exists for planners to lead the necessary efforts to rebuild the national and local economies and improve our communities.

Key findings in this report demonstrate that less than one-third of Americans believe that their communities are doing enough to

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On the Fall Conference agenda: Randall Arendt, a movie night, chapter awards, and more.  
Pawleys Island ~ Oct. 17-19



## President's Message

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address the country's economy and that a wide majority of people believe that community planning is needed in order to effect change. Statistically, 14% of Americans believe that market forces alone, without community planning, will help the economy and create more jobs; however, 66% believe it takes both.

The bottom line is that communities that plan for the future are stronger and more resilient than those that don't. We planners in South Carolina need to use these statistics to our advantage and look for opportunities to align ourselves with local and state business and elected leaders to lead the necessary efforts and funding priorities to create jobs, education, safety, neighborhood protection, and a clean environment. In other words, we need to demonstrate that basic planning principles are stepping stones on the road to a viable economic recovery and stable quality of life.

### Fall Conference to take place soon

Fall is just around the corner and with it our annual multi-day Fall Conference. The SCAPA Fall Conference will take place at Litchfield Beach Resort in Pawleys Island on Oct. 17-19.

The annual business meeting will include the induction of the recently elected SCAPA Executive Committee and the announcement of SCAPA Planning Award winners. For more information about attending this conference or sponsoring it, please see the Program Update section of this edition of the *Palmetto Planner* or

SCAPA's Web site, [www.scapa.org](http://www.scapa.org), within the next few weeks.

Please make plans to attend this event as it is always insightful and a great opportunity to network with your colleagues.

### National events on horizon

Fall is also the time that the APA Leadership meets in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the Federal Policy and Program Briefing on Sept. 29-Oct. 2.

As your President, I plan to attend and represent South Carolina during the Chapter Presidents' Council meetings. Attendance at the APA leadership meeting will contribute to our knowledge base of issues facing APA members, the performance of the South Carolina chapter and overall service to the planning profession. In addition to the leadership meetings, I will attend several education sessions to hear from lawmakers and leading administration officials about new federal initiatives and how they affect local planning. I also will have the opportunity to participate in an advocacy day that will allow me to meet face-to-face with South Carolina's Congressional representatives and discuss the critical planning issues facing our state with them.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,

*Susan Britt*

[www.scapa.org](http://www.scapa.org)

An online resource for South Carolina's planning community

# Agricultural Preservation in South Carolina: Protecting our Farms, Preserving our Future

By Andrea N. Pietras, AICP, with contributions from Nikki Seibert, Lowcountry Local First

Agriculture is important to South Carolina for many reasons, not the least of which is its vitality to South Carolina's rural character and historic heritage. Since World War II, increasing numbers of farms in South Carolina and across the nation have been threatened by and fallen victim to urban and suburban sprawl. The remaining farms have been faced with the many conflicts that arise between existing agricultural operations and residents of new developments who are not used to living near farming activities.

However, it seems that this trend may be turning around. The 2007 Census of Agriculture reported a four percent increase in the total number of farms nationwide between 2002 and 2007, with the majority of this growth from small operations—farms selling less than \$250,000 in agricultural products annually. Interestingly, in 2007 small farms accounted for 91 percent of all farms nationwide, and the percentage of small farms was highest in New England and the South.<sup>[1]</sup>

These national trends are reflected in the agricultural statistics for South Carolina as well. Between 2002 and 2007, South Carolina saw an increase of about five percent in the number of farms and an increase of about one percent in the amount of land in farms.<sup>[2]</sup>



Charleston Tea Plantation, Wadmalaw Island  
Photo by Cathy Ruff

While the number of farms and farmland acreage increased, the average farm size decreased by approximately four percent and the market value of agricultural products sold in South Carolina increased 58 percent.<sup>[3]</sup>

This resurgence of agriculture has been fortified by the growing demand for locally grown foods, local seafood, locally made products such as Sweetgrass Baskets, and agri-tourism activities over the past few years. Moreover, agriculture is a vital economic driver in South Carolina. A 2008 study prepared for the South Carolina Agribusiness Council (PABC) and the South Carolina Forestry Commission by Miley, Gallo & Associates, LLC, found that “Agribusiness,” which includes all aspects of farming and forestry, has a \$33.9 billion

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## *Agricultural Preservation*

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impact on South Carolina's economy and supports nearly 200,000 jobs. <sup>[4]</sup>

The importance of agriculture to South Carolina's economy, character, and history is clear and many efforts around the state are working to preserve this important resource. The remainder of this article gives an overview of some of the programs in Charleston County that are working to preserve agriculture. Representatives from these programs, as well as representatives of other agricultural preservation programs, will be featured as part of the SCAPA Fall Conference Agricultural Preservation conference track (Pawleys Island, Oct. 17 – 19, 2012).

### **Charleston County Agricultural Issues Advisory Committee**

In November 2009, the Charleston County Council established the Charleston County Agricultural Issues Advisory Committee to identify ways to foster agriculture and agribusiness in both Charleston County and South Carolina. The Committee is comprised of Charleston County Council members; mayors/staff of local municipalities; local farmers, fisherman, foresters, and Sweetgrass Basket makers; and representatives from Clemson Extension, the South Carolina Department of



Creek Farm, Edisto Island  
Photo by Cathy Ruff

Agriculture, the United States Department of Agriculture/Natural Resources Conservation Service, Charleston County School District, Lowcountry Local First, and the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League.

The Committee has worked to support local agriculture in a variety of ways, including:

- Coordinating with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture to support the Tourist-Oriented Directional Signage (TODS) legislation that the Governor recently signed into law.
- Presenting recommended amendments for agriculture related

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# CHAPTER ELECTIONS



Boughman

SCAPA will hold its Executive Committee elections next month. Because the programs and other benefits that SCAPA offers to its members are directly dependent on the leadership of the Executive Committee, the election of officers is very important. The official slate of candidates consists of these planners.

## **President-Elect**

Ernie Boughman, AICP

## **Secretary-Treasurer**

John Danford, AICP  
Bill Huggins

## **Director-At-Large**

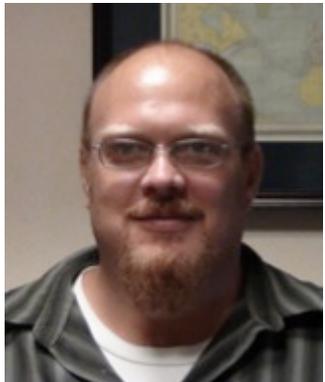
Steve Allen, AICP  
Allison Hardin  
John Newman, AICP  
Andrea Pietras, AICP

## **Important Dates to Remember**

- Sept. 1: Ballots distributed to all SCAPA members in good standing.
- Sept. 30: Balloting closes.
- Oct. 5: Results announced.
- Oct. 19: Officers installed at annual conference.



Allen



Danford



Hardin



Huggins



Pietras



Newman

# Clemson student chapter news

## Department reorganizes; two new faculty join

By Cliff Ellis, Ph.D., MCRP Program Director

Clemson University is dividing the School of Planning, Development, Preservation and Landscape Architecture into two new departments in order to create units of more manageable size. The Master of City and Regional Planning (MCRP) program will become part of the new Department of Planning, Development and Preservation. The landscape architects will form their own Department of Landscape Architecture.

### New faculty members announced

Two new faculty members will join Clemson's MCRP program this year.

**Tim Green** holds master and doctoral degrees in urban planning from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

His main research interests lie in economic development and regional planning, specifically how economic development policies are created at local and regional scales. Most recently, his research examined how regional economic development organizations used the concept of industry clusters to set policy and make decisions. He has also conducted research on the relationship between natural and economic systems in natural disasters in the Midwest and



Green

New Orleans.

Before pursuing his graduate work, he worked in conservation science at the World Wildlife Fund in Washington, D.C.

**Eric Morris** holds master and doctoral degrees in urban planning from the University of California at Los Angeles.

His primary focus is transportation planning, and particularly how transportation contributes to our quality of life. His current research focuses on transportation and happiness; transportation, time use, and activity patterns; and transportation and access to employment, shopping, food, and medical care. He has a strong interest in transportation equity and disadvantaged

populations. He also conducts research in the field of transportation history, and is currently co-authoring a book on the development and financing of the American freeway system.

He wrote a column on transportation for the *New York Times* for several years, and now is a regular contributor to the *Freakonomics* Web



Morris

site. Before returning to academia, he worked as a travel writer, a sports writer, and a television writer and producer.

Both of these new faculty members look forward to starting their academic teaching careers at Clemson University and getting to know the community of professional planners in South Carolina. Please welcome them.

# Conferences

## APA President a guest at Summer Conference

More than 100 planners attended SCAPA's Summer Conference in Lexington on July 25.

APA President, Mitchell Silver, delivered the opening remarks and provided an inspiring talk about the value of planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Conference sessions featured the annual legislative update, a panel discussion about gaming machine activity across the state, and sessions on transportation planning in South Carolina and environmental resource planning at the local and regional levels.



SCAPA President-Elect Robby Moody, APA President Mitchell Silver, and SCAPA President Susan Britt at the Summer Conference in Lexington, S.C. on July 25.

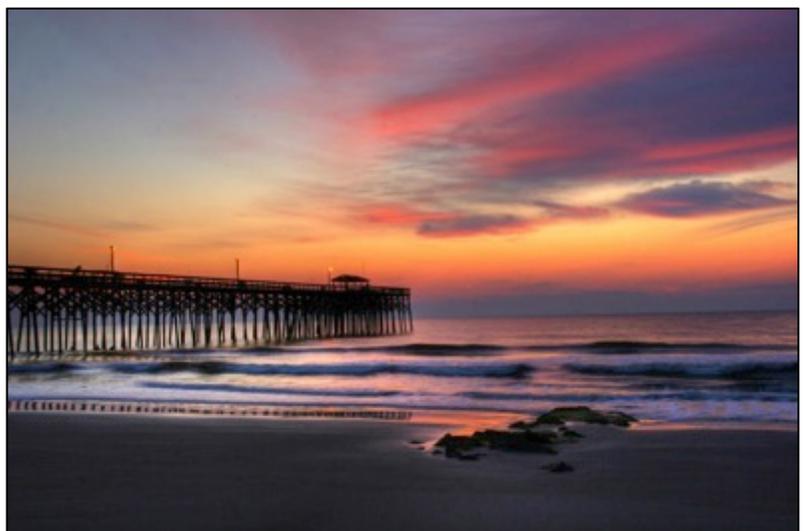
## Fall Conference at Pawleys Island on Oct. 17-19

By Robby Moody, AICP

SCAPA will return to the Litchfield Beach and Golf Resort on Pawleys Island for this year's Fall Conference. The Low Country is an amazing place to be in the fall – the air is cooler, the crowds are lighter and the hospitality is plentiful.

In addition to the regular conference program, SCAPA will host a pre-conference workshop entitled "Redevelopment Design Principles for Retrofitting Commercial Highway Strips" on Wednesday afternoon led by noted author and conservation planner, Randall Arendt. The informational lecture and companion hands-on design exercise, affordably priced at \$55, will carry 3.5 hours worth of certificate maintenance (CM) credits for certified planners. (See sidebar on next page for more information about how credits work.)

The conference tracks will be content rich with themed sessions focusing on professional



A beautiful Low Country sunset.

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## Fall Conference

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development, agriculture in South Carolina and development codes in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Planning ethics and a case law round-up will also be included. As a bonus, Esri will offer its on-site training sessions “Emerging Trends in GIS for Planners” at the bargain price of \$25 per session.

If you have any particular court cases or legal topics that you would like covered during the conference’s legal update, please contact Tyson Smith at [tsmith@planningandlaw.com](mailto:tsmith@planningandlaw.com) or Leah Youngblood at [lyoungblood@cityofrockhill.com](mailto:lyoungblood@cityofrockhill.com).

Special activities for this year will start with a “Welcome to Litchfield” reception Wednesday evening at the resort and an opportunity to earn 2 CM credits at the screening of *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*. Thursday’s President’s reception and the Clemson student auction fundraiser are perennial favorites that you will not want to miss. The conference will conclude Friday with a chapter business meeting, two morning sessions, the SCAPA awards luncheon and the installation of new officers.

## The difference between CM and CE

As a reminder, the state requires all planning professionals and appointed board members (Planning Commissions, Zoning Board of Appeals’ members, Board of Architectural Review members, etc.) in South Carolina to participate in a six-hour orientation program during their first year in service and to attend at least three hours of continuing education (CE) programs every year after that. All SCAPA conference sessions count toward the required CE credits.

Additionally, the 49% of SCAPA members who hold AICP (American Institute of Certified Planners) certification must complete 32 hours of certificate maintenance (CM) credits every two years. Of these hours, 1.5 must cover the topic of ethics and 1.5 must cover the topic of current planning law. Nearly all SCAPA conference sessions count toward CM requirements. (The conference program will denote whether a particular session will counts toward CM credits.)

# Web site administrator needed

SCAPA is looking for a member who possesses Web site development skills to assist in the maintenance and enhancement of the SCAPA Web site.

The current SCAPA Web site has been highly successful at communicating important information to our membership and elevating the Chapter’s visibility in the planning community.

SCAPA actively strives to offer additional value to the benefits we provide our members and therefore seeks to constantly improve and raise the standard of the Web site and its content.

If you have a working knowledge of Web site development, strong creativity, and a desire to serve in an important role within the SCAPA organization, please contact Leah Youngblood at [lyoungblood@cityofrockhill.com](mailto:lyoungblood@cityofrockhill.com) or Ernie Boughman at [ernie.boughman@urs.com](mailto:ernie.boughman@urs.com).

## Agricultural Preservation

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state legislation to the local legislative delegation.

- Coordinating with the school district to help re-introduce agriculture as an educational program.

- Hosting a workshop to educate local farmers on the special tax exemption for agricultural real

property.

- Proposing revisions to the County Business License Ordinance to create flexibility for agricultural operations.

- Proposing revisions to the County Zoning Ordinance such as:

- Incorporating flexibility for agricultural signs and ponds;

- Streamlining the permitting process for local wineries, agri-tourism uses, farmers markets, stables and agricultural related special events; and

- Allowing Sweetgrass Basket stands to be located in required buffers.

The Committee also is currently working to understand more about Voluntary Agricultural District programs to determine if it wants to pursue this type of legislation at the county and/or state level. Voluntary Agricultural District programs allow farmers to establish areas where agriculture is encouraged and protected, increase public awareness of agricultural activity, and help leaders plan future development that will encourage and



Crabbing on Church Creek, Wadmalaw Island  
Photo by Cathy Ruff

support local agriculture. Several states have adopted Voluntary Agricultural District programs in a variety of formats. The Committee is coordinating with the South Carolina Department of Agriculture to facilitate a workshop with representatives from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and North Carolina State University to learn about the North Carolina Voluntary Agricultural District program, which has been in place since 1985.

For more information on the Charleston County Agricultural Issues Advisory Committee, please contact Andrea Pietras at [apietras@charlestoncounty.org](mailto:apietras@charlestoncounty.org).

## Town of Mount Pleasant Local Food and Farm Assessment

In 2011, the Town of Mount Pleasant Planning Department partnered with the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture

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Program (ASAP) to develop a Food Economy Plan and Local Food Assessment. This study was funded by the Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Sustainable Community Innovation Grants Program.

The Food and Farm Assessment focuses on the whole of Charleston County for agricultural production and consumption related data, as the majority of agricultural land in the Town of Mount Pleasant planning area is located outside its corporate limits. The assessment examines general demographics for the Town of Mount Pleasant and Charleston County, agricultural trends in Charleston County, opportunities for locally grown foods in local markets, consumer food spending and consumption, and local market potential for locally grown food.

The assessment concludes with recommendations for actions and policies that can be utilized by local governments to support the local food economy, including:

- Developing a comprehensive farmland plan to address the economic role

of agriculture and identify strategies that foster agriculture;

- Reviewing potential regulatory barriers to agriculture such as zoning laws that restrict farms from developing related commercial enterprises, permitting processes for agriculture related seasonal events, and restrictions on farming in urban and suburban areas;

- Considering a Transfer of Development Rights program to allow developers to purchase development rights from owners of agricultural parcels and transfer them to urban and suburban areas where infrastructure exists; and

- Utilizing tax exemptions for agricultural operations, as permitted under South Carolina State Law.

The Local Food and Farm Assessment can be accessed on the Town of Mount Pleasant's Web site at [www.tompsc.com](http://www.tompsc.com).

## **GrowFood Carolina**

In the United States, the average unit of food is transported almost 1,500 miles before it is consumed, making food more expensive for consumers, consuming an enormous amount of energy, negatively impacting rural economies, and reducing the availability of local products. Food hubs bridge the gap between local farms and local consumers by providing distribution, logistics, sales, marketing, and liability insurance services for local farmers as well as regulatory compliance and community education. The United States Department of Agriculture's



GrowFood Carolina Warehouse, Charleston  
Photo Courtesy of S.C. Coastal Conservation League

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## *Agricultural Preservation*

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working definition of a food hub is “a centrally located facility with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution, and/or marketing of locally/regionally produced food products.”

GrowFood Carolina is the first local food hub in the state. It was initiated by the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League in April 2010 with the purchase of an abandoned warehouse/office building located in the upper portion of the Charleston peninsula. GrowFood Carolina opened for business in October 2011 and currently works with almost 30 local farmers to provide local food to about 70 businesses in the Charleston area.

For more information on GrowFood Carolina, visit [www.growfoodcarolina.com](http://www.growfoodcarolina.com).

## **Lowcountry Local First**

Lowcountry Local First is an organization aimed at strengthening community support of local businesses and farmers. Its main initiatives are the Buy Local program, which promotes local businesses, and the Eat Local program, which supports local food systems by connecting local farms, producers and apprentices with restaurants, institutions and people. The Growing New Farmers Incubator program, which is part of the Eat Local initiative, includes two phases, the Apprenticeship program and the Incubator Farm program. The Apprenticeship

program pairs aspiring farmers with hands-on mentorship and classes. To date, more than 50 individuals and eight mentor farms have participated in this program.

Lowcountry Local First’s Incubator Farm program is the first program of its type in South Carolina. This program provides low-risk business incubation for small and emerging farmers interested in entering the market. This project will provide a stepping-stone and outlet for the more than 30 farming apprentices graduating from the Lowcountry Local First Growing New Farmers program each year as



Soybean Fields, Edisto Island  
Photo by Cathy Ruff

well as other new farmers in the region. The property will be leased from the Walnut Hill Plantation, LLC, on Johns Island. The initial 10-acre parcel will be divided into one- to two-acre plots for up to six qualified new farmers and one farm manager. The remaining acreage

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will be utilized as a teaching plot for apprentices, students, and the public. During a three-year incubation period, the Incubator Farm will provide new farmers the opportunity to share equipment, participate in training, build their market, and receive mentorship.

The project site and packing shed will be designed to meet Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) standards to assist incubated farmers in meeting the growing demand for those markets. The teaching plot will be utilized as a hands-on teaching location, demonstration area, and experimental plot for the incubated farmers, apprentices, existing farmers, and the public. The Incubator Farm and Training Center will increase the number of new farmers in South Carolina, assist both new and existing farmers in managing the risks associated with owning a farm business, and educate a variety of groups on the importance of local agriculture. As a first of its kind in South Carolina, this project will serve as a model that has the potential to reach the entire state.

Lowcountry Local First also is a partner in the South Carolina New and Beginning Farmers Program, a statewide initiative hosted through Clemson University that provides education, business training, and networking support for beginning farmers.

For more information on Lowcountry Local First, visit [www.lowcountrylocalfirst.org](http://www.lowcountrylocalfirst.org).

## **In conclusion**

Recent issues facing our nation such as the economic recession and energy concerns have



Fishing in the Town of McClellanville

Photo by Cathy Ruff

made more Americans aware of the importance of locally grown food. The programs included in this article are only a few examples of the many efforts across the state and nation to foster local agriculture and provide links between local producers and consumers. Please join us at the Fall SCAPA Conference, which will feature a six-session Agricultural Preservation conference track, to learn more about these and other efforts to promote and protect local agriculture.

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### References:

[1] [2] [3] Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture, USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

[4] “The Economic Impact of the Agribusiness Industry In South Carolina”, Prepared by Miley, Gallo & Associates, LLC for the Palmetto Agribusiness Council. September 2008.

# Thank you



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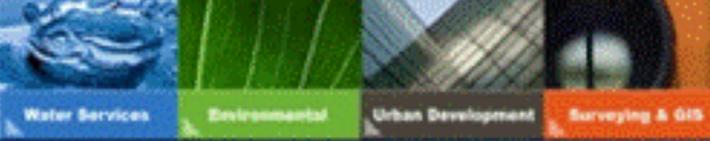
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When you sponsor a SCAPA conference, you will meet local, state, and federal government leaders who make decisions about which consultants to hire for planning, transportation, engineering, and related needs. More than one third of SCAPA members hold key management positions in government agencies. These are people who can help you grow your business.

Additionally, when you sponsor a SCAPA conference, you will meet others from the private sector, with whom you might be able to partner on projects in the future. Twenty percent of SCAPA's members—90 people—work in the private sector.

Planning professionals from all regions of South Carolina, as well as from North Carolina, Georgia, and beyond come together at SCAPA's three annual conferences. For the upcoming Fall Conference, SCAPA is offering two sponsorship levels—at \$100 and \$500. Both levels will receive prominent recognition during the conference. The \$100 level will receive exhibit space. The \$500 level will receive exhibit space and conference registration for one person.

### ADVERTISE IN THE PALMETTO PLANNER AND ON THE SCAPA WEB SITE

Did you know that you can advertise in the Palmetto Planner and on the SCAPA Web site for one low amount? The newsletter and Web site both provide information about current planning topics, chapter conferences and activities, and job opportunities.

Advertisement space in the Palmetto Planner (four issues) and the SCAPA Web site, [www.scapa.org](http://www.scapa.org), is available for \$200 per year.

Pat Collins: 864-221-1433 / [jpcol44@bellsouth.net](mailto:jpcol44@bellsouth.net)

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