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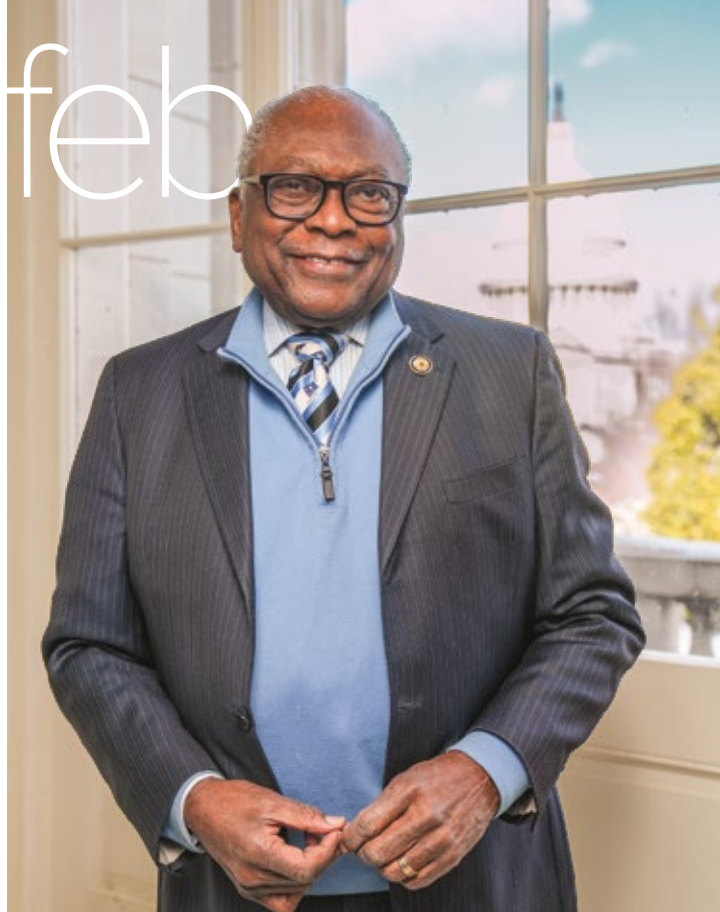
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U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn is the recipient of the Electric Cooperative Outstanding Public Service Award for his dedication to South Carolinians over 30-plus years in Congress. Photo by Denny Gainer, NRECA



tri-countyelectric.net

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CO-OP NEWS EDITOR

Sheila D. Rivers



Rate change to address rising costs

LIKE OTHER South Carolina utilities, Tri-County Electric Cooperative is impacted by rising costs that are

affecting the energy industry. Prices for critical materials and equipment and for wholesale power have risen dramatically.

After years of holding our rates steady, and after exhausting every possible option to avoid this step, we have reached a point where an adjustment is necessary. Our co-op faces significant cost increases that are beyond our ability to control or absorb. To continue delivering essential services while accounting for rising costs in our industry, a rate change will take effect in March 2025.

Why is this rate change necessary?

Over the past five years, we've seen the price of critical materials, equipment and supplies double. Wholesale power costs also have risen dramatically. Because South Carolina cooperatives like ours purchase electricity from suppliers such as Duke Energy, Santee Cooper and the Southeastern Power Administration, our rates are driven in large part by the price of wholesale power from those suppliers.

Those wholesale prices are going up. In particular, we will see significant cost increases arise due to the end of a court-agreed Santee Cooper rate freeze on Dec. 31, 2024.

Starting in 2025, Santee Cooper customers—including co-op members—will begin paying for the unbudgeted, extra costs that Santee Cooper incurred during its four-year rate freeze period, when the utility wasn't allowed to raise its rates to cover those costs.

We don't yet know exactly how much co-op members will have to pay

for these new costs, but we expect it to be substantial—into the hundreds of millions of dollars. These charges will come on top of Santee Cooper's other planned rate increases, which will help it meet the rising prices for fuel and materials.

As a not-for-profit cooperative, we don't want to raise our electric rates any more than you do, but these rising supply and wholesale power costs are beyond our ability to absorb. While change is rarely easy, it is sometimes unavoidable.

What does this mean for you?

For the average residential member, this adjustment will result in an increase of about \$19.50 per month. However, the exact amount may vary depending on individual energy use and type of account.

To view detailed rate information, go to our website at tri-countyelectric.net and click on the link MyEnergyOnline.

Programs to help you save

We're committed to helping ease this transition. Programs such as Help My House and Beat The Peak offer practical ways to enhance energy efficiency and lower bills. To learn more and to sign up, visit tri-countyelectric.net. Or call us to see which program would be the right fit for you.

As these changes go into effect, please know we're here to answer your questions and provide support. You can call us at (803) 874-1215. We will navigate these challenges as we always do—together.

Chad T. Lowder

CHAD T. LOWDER
Chief Executive Officer

Local gridiron all-stars lend a hand

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

DAVID BLANCHARD KNOWS how to pave the way for his teammates. The offensive lineman from Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School is so good at it, he was selected to play in the Touchstone Energy Cooperatives Bowl last December.

Two days before the game, he cleared the way in the aisles of a Target store in Myrtle Beach, helping local elementary school student Jaxon White-Drummond with a \$150 shopping spree sponsored by Tri-County Electric and South Carolina's other Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. Jaxon was one of 44 deserving elementary school students treated to the shopping spree, and with Blanchard's help, he picked up some much-needed items, such



PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER

as shoes and clothes. Noah Lucas, an all-star tight end from Lower Richland High School, helped the student he was teamed with find pants, shirts and school supplies.

“It was amazing,” says Lucas. “I was imagining myself as being a dad and that was my daughter or son.”

Lucas also got to imagine himself as an electric cooperative lineman. The night before the game, players explored careers as lineworkers through hands-on demonstrations presented by a crew from Horry Electric Cooperative.

“That was something I’d been looking forward,” says Lucas. “I’m a very hands-on person, so this is something I could see myself doing.”

The shopping spree and lineman demonstration were part of a week of experiences for the 86 players participating in the annual all-star game played at Doug Shaw Memorial Stadium on Dec. 21. South Carolina's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives sponsor the bowl game to recognize players for their athletic ability and character.



Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School's David Blanchard (right) makes sure the hat fits Jaxon White-Drummond.

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Ready for an experience you won't forget?

Your co-op has two amazing trips planned this summer. Juniors: Apply for the Washington Youth Tour. Sophomores: Apply for the Cooperative Youth Summit.

Juniors: Experience Washington, D.C., with hundreds of students from across South Carolina and the country, meeting lawmakers and touring all the sights. Your electric co-op will cover your round-trip plane ticket, tours and meals. In other words, it's all free!

Sophomores: Experience South Carolina's capital like never before. Tour the Statehouse, meet lawmakers and see how co-ops are preparing for our state's energy future. Plus, there's plenty of fun with visits to popular Columbia attractions like Riverbanks Zoo & Garden. Your electric co-op will cover all your expenses.

We've made it easy to apply for either FREE trip. Apply today!



Washington Youth Tour: June 15-20, 2025



Cooperative Youth Summit: July 14-17, 2025



Applications available: tri-countyelectric.net/youth
Application deadline: March 3, 2025



Wrapped in savings

ENSURING YOUR HOME IS PROPERLY INSULATED can improve energy efficiency and make your home more comfortable.

Many older homes have less insulation than newer homes, but even newer homes can benefit from additional insulation. Adding insulation and air sealing your home can provide a big bang for your buck in energy savings and overall comfort, although they are not the least expensive efficiency improvements.

The most common areas to insulate are attics, ceilings, crawl spaces or unconditioned basements, exterior and interior walls, floors, and ductwork located in unconditioned spaces.

Insulation is rated in R-value, which measures the material's resistance to conductive heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating effectiveness. The R-value you need depends on factors such as climate, type of heating and cooling system and which area of the home you plan to insulate.

The required amount and effectiveness rating of insulation varies by climate, but many online sources, including the U.S. Department of Energy and Home Depot, provide recommendations. Visit energy.gov/insulation to learn about recommended R-values for specific areas of the home based on climate zones.

Insulation is offered in a wide range of materials, from bulky fiberglass rolls to cellulose materials made from recycled paper products. If you're considering installing additional insulation, talk to an expert who can offer guidance on the right materials for your budget, climate and comfort needs.

—ABBY BERRY

MEMBERS SPEAK ON THE COOPERATIVE DIFFERENCE



Kent Young

TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC MEMBER

MEMBER FOR: Almost 18 years

HOMETOWN: Eutawville

OCCUPATION: Former teacher

Staying connected

For Kent Young, keeping the lights on isn't the only important thing, but it's certainly one of them—and he says Tri-County Electric Cooperative ensures he never has to worry.

The co-op's staff are always in contact with him during power outages, Young says, and they work hard to get the power up and running as soon as possible. The cooperative's generator program also gives members options when bad weather puts the lights at risk.

“[TriCoLink] works very efficiently.”

—KENT YOUNG

But while Young appreciates Tri-County's electric service, the former Orangeburg County teacher says he views

TriCoLink broadband service as one of the co-op's best offerings.

“When COVID was at its top, many young people could not get their work done because their internet at home was just too slow,” Young says. “So by having a speed of 1 gig, that will alleviate that problem.”

Reliable internet can save students from having to do their homework at a fast-food restaurant just to get the connection they need, Young says. And, he adds, TriCoLink runs smoothly at his home.

“It helps the alarm system, the camera system—everything works very efficiently,” Young says.

Whether using a computer, phone or TV, Young says TriCoLink and Tri-County Electric will ensure he can stay connected for years to come.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Scan this QR code or visit SCLiving.coop/stories to share what you love about your co-op. Entries may be published in future issues of *South Carolina Living*, online and on social media.

Don't get tricked by this utility scam

Scammers will try anything to deceive utility customers, including a tactic that claims customers have *overpaid* their bills. **If you receive a call, text or email from someone claiming you overpaid your bill and need to provide your banking or credit card information to receive a credit, it's a scam.** In the event you overpaid your bill, your electric co-op would apply a credit to your account or refund an overpayment with a mailed check. A representative from your co-op will never ask you to provide banking or credit card information for an overpayment. If you are worried that a scammer posing as someone from your electric co-op might have contacted you, reach out directly to your co-op's member services team at the phone number listed on your power bill or co-op website. SOURCE: UTILITIES UNITED AGAINST SCAMS



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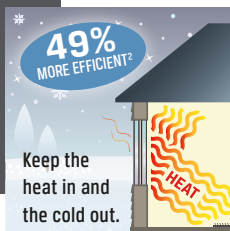
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Three steps for the good

ONE OF MY FAVORITE POLITICAL IDIOMS IS ALSO ONE I WISH we put into practice more often: “reaching across the aisle.”

The phrase nods to the physical layout of legislative chambers, including the U.S. Congress, where Republicans and Democrats are traditionally seated across from each other.

“Reaching across the aisle” means working with members of the opposing party to accomplish something that benefits everyone. Unfortunately, we tend to see less reaching and more finger-pointing in today’s increasingly polarized politics.

Of all the hundreds of local officials, state lawmakers and members of Congress I’ve had the opportunity to work with, U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, the subject of this issue’s cover story, is undoubtedly among the best at reaching across the aisle.

In our recent conversation, Clyburn shared his own take on bipartisanship. He commits: “If there are five steps between us, I want to take three of them.”

Clyburn picked up that wisdom from his minister father, who once cast the deciding vote for his own challenger in a tightly contested board of elders election because he wanted to maintain harmony among his church members.

Since Clyburn entered Congress in 1993, taking those three steps—or going just a little further than the middle to meet his collaborators—has proved an effective means of serving his people. By his people, I don’t mean just those who vote Democratic or who live in the 6th Congressional District. Clyburn is most interested in advocating for people in rural communities—people who work hard to pay their bills and educate their children. His people aren’t R’s and D’s but people in need of what they deserve—living wages, a good education and affordable access to reliable services such as electricity and high-speed internet.

Clyburn’s persistent efforts and effective partnerships as a civil rights activist, South Carolina’s Human Affairs Commissioner and a congressman for more than three decades have helped fill those needs.

When he joined Gov. John West’s staff in 1971, he was the first nonwhite adviser to a South Carolina governor since Reconstruction. Clyburn helped the administration address the poor conditions in which many South Carolinians lived, especially in rural communities. One of their initiatives was the “Privy Project,” which provided modular bathrooms to homes without indoor plumbing. Clyburn worked closely with electric cooperatives to identify the homes most in need of this service.

It would not be the last time Clyburn had the backs of rural electric cooperative members.

In the late 2000s, when Congress debated climate policies that threatened to drastically increase the price of electricity



ERIN NICHOLS

“If there are five steps between us, I want to take three of them.” —U.S. REP. JIM CLYBURN

for co-op members, Clyburn fought for co-op members’ interests in Washington, D.C.

Not long afterward, I worked with Clyburn to develop a program that would allow homeowners and businesses to finance energy efficiency upgrades through low-interest loans. It would save consumers money by lowering their power bills, improve their quality of life with properly heated and cooled homes, and reduce carbon emissions by minimizing energy consumption. Clyburn championed what became the Rural Energy Savings Program, which passed in 2014 with bipartisan support and has helped hundreds of cooperative members across South Carolina and thousands across the nation.

Well before COVID-19, Clyburn listened to South Carolina’s co-ops about the need for high-speed internet access in rural areas, and he helped secure federal funding for rural broadband expansion. In January 2021, at a new high in our nation’s political divisiveness, Clyburn received a call from South Carolina’s Republican governor, Henry McMaster. Gov. McMaster, who also puts the people of his state above partisan politics, told Clyburn he would propose \$30 million to fund “your broadband program” in his upcoming State of the State address. The McMaster-Clyburn collaboration has helped make South Carolina a national model for broadband expansion.

As the need to improve the quality of life for all South Carolinians remains and the divisions between our political parties seem to widen, I’m positive that pointing and blaming do us more harm than good.

I am hopeful that we will get back to reaching across the aisle. And I’m grateful to Clyburn for showing us how to take tangible steps toward bridging that divide.

MIKE COUICK President and CEO,
The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina

Maximize warmth, minimize waste

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

Q I heard that fireplaces can make your home colder. How do I keep my home comfortable while enjoying cozy fires?

FIREPLACE EFFICIENCY

A When I was a little girl, my dad told me that some nights were too cold to have a fire. That seemed ridiculous to me, but as with many other things he said, he was right.

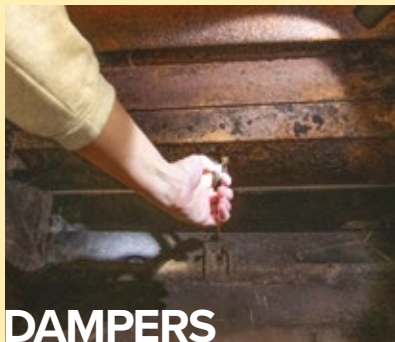
We had an open fireplace more suited for ambiance than creating heat. When you have a fire, warm air rises and draws smoke out through the chimney. This also draws warm air out of the house. This invisible force is called the stack effect.

The impact is exacerbated in drafty homes. When the

warm air escapes through the chimney, it is replaced by cool air leaking in through gaps and cracks in the home. The greater the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the greater the stack effect, hence Dad's rule of no fires on the coldest nights.

Wood fireplaces aren't efficient for heating your home. Most of the heat goes out of the chimney. If you enjoy the comfort of curling up in front of the fireplace during the colder months, below are some tips to efficiently operate a fireplace in your home.

Use my dad's sage advice and these tips to keep your home warm while gathering your loved ones around a glowing fire during winter.



MARK GILLILAND, PIONEER UTILITY RESOURCES

DAMPERS

► **Close the chimney damper** when you don't have a fire going and there are no hot ashes in the fireplace. Leaving the damper open allows warm air to escape, wasting energy.

► **If your damper doesn't close properly** or your chimney doesn't have one, purchase a product designed for the task. Various chimney plug sizes and styles are available, including inflatable options (like the one below) designed to fit snugly in place. While you are at the hardware store, pick up some caulk and weather stripping to seal air leaks around windows, doors and pipes along exterior walls.



CHIMNEY BALLOON



HEAT & GLO

GAS

► **Fireplaces with gas logs** must be installed with a mechanism that always keeps the damper open. This safety feature allows gases from the pilot light to escape. Installing glass doors on the fireplace can reduce air leakage.

► **Sealed combustion gas fireplaces** are fully enclosed systems that draw the air needed for combustion from the outside. When properly installed, you get the benefit of warmth from the fire without heat loss from drafts. If you have gas logs and enjoy the ease of a gas fireplace, consider upgrading to a sealed combustion unit.

► **Turn the pilot light off in the summer** to reduce wasted gas. Follow the instructions in the owner's manual to avoid potential safety issues.



MIRANDA BOUTELLE, EFFICIENCY SERVICES GROUP

STOVES

► **Woodstoves and pellet stoves are options that provide more heat** than wood or gas fireplaces. Federal tax credits are available for high-efficiency biomass stoves. A credit of 30% of the project cost—including the cost of installation up to a maximum of \$2,000—is available for products purchased and installed between Jan. 1, 2023, and Dec. 31, 2032. The unit must have a thermal efficiency rating of 75% or more. Visit energystar.gov for more information.

► If you have a woodstove, fireplace or any fuel-burning appliance in your home, be sure to **install and maintain smoke and carbon monoxide detectors**. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can be harmful or deadly if present at a high level in your home. ☹

MIRANDA BOUTELLE writes on energy efficiency topics for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Uncover savings with a DIY energy audit

BY MIRANDA BOUTELLE

FINDING WAYS TO SAVE ENERGY—and money on your power bill—can be as easy as creating a checklist of improvements based on what you see around your home.

Some South Carolina electric cooperatives can assist you with an energy audit, either by phone or in person. Contact your local co-op to find out whether it offers these services. But you can also do your own home check-up—all you need are a flashlight, dust mask, tape measure and cooking thermometer.

HVAC: Check the age of your heating and cooling equipment, which typically lasts 10 to 30 years, depending on the type and how well it's maintained. If your equipment is older, it may be time to budget for an upgrade. Replace the air filter if needed.

DRAFTS: Feel for air leakage around windows and spots where different building materials come together. Check under sinks for gaps around pipes, and seal them with weatherstripping, caulk or expanding foam.

LIGHTS: Replace incandescent or compact fluorescent light bulbs with LEDs, which use far less energy and last longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.

WATER: Check for leaking faucets, and make sure aerators and showerheads are high-efficiency models in good condition. The gallons-per-minute rating for aerators should be 0.5 to 1.5 GPM, and showerheads should be no more than 2 GPM.



MARK GILLILAND, PIONEER UTILITY RESOURCES

DON'T FUR-GET! Check your HVAC filter and replace it if needed. A dirty filter—yes, Fido and Fluffy contribute to that—can cause your system to work harder than necessary, decreasing efficiency and shortening the system's life.

Determine your water temperature by running it for three minutes at the faucet closest to your water heater then filling a cup and measuring with a cooking thermometer. Hot water should be between 120 and 140 degrees. You can lower the temperature on your water heater to reduce energy waste and prevent scalding.

INSULATION: Put on a dust mask and use a tape measure to check that your

attic insulation is at least a foot deep. This can vary depending on the type of insulation used and your geography.

Insulation should be evenly distributed throughout the attic, but it can become compacted over time. Loose fill or blown-in insulation should be fluffy and evenly dispersed. Rolled batt insulation should fit together without gaps.

Exterior walls also should be insulated, but if your home was built before the 1960s, the walls probably aren't. Homes from the 1960s or 1970s likely need more insulation. Sometimes you can see wall insulation by removing an outlet cover or switch plate and using a flashlight to look inside the wall cavity. (But turn off the power at the electrical panel to avoid getting shocked!) Wall insulation can be blown in from the inside or the outside of the home—you'll want a professional's help.

Unfinished basements should, at minimum, have insulation on the area between the top of the foundation and the underside of the home's first-story floor. Crawl spaces should have insulation on the underside of the floor between the floor joists. Insulation should be properly supported in contact with the floor with no air gaps. Water pipes and ductwork should also be insulated.

Once your home energy audit is finished, start prioritizing home energy efficiency projects. For step-by-step instructions, visit energy.gov/save. ☺



energy
efficiency
tip

Is your home office energy- and cost-efficient? ENERGY STAR-rated equipment uses up to 50% less energy than standard models. Set monitors, printers and scanners to automatically switch to sleep or energy-saver mode when not in use. In addition to saving energy, the equipment will stay cooler, which will extend its life. You can also save energy by using efficient lamps for task lighting. Replace older bulbs with energy-saving LEDs. SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV

Mary Martha Greene

RESIDES IN: Columbia and Beaufort.

BRUSH WITH GREATNESS: Celebrity chef and Julia Child collaborator Jacques Pepin once kissed her hand.

CULINARY AWARDS: Only one, which she received in ninth grade for baking napoleons for State Foreign Language Day. (But it was first place, and she still has the trophy.)

SECRET WEAPONS: Cookie scoops. Greene has 16, from a tiny scoop for benne seed wafers to a large one for crab cakes.

CHARITY WORK: Greene teaches baking to 17–25-year-old homeless and at-risk youth at the Mental Illness Recovery Center Youth Drop-In Center in Columbia.

Return of the queen

Mary Martha Greene has a confession: She is not the true cheese biscuit queen.

That title rightly belonged to her Aunt Mimi, a maestro of the stand mixer who brilliantly folded Rice Krispies into her dough and created a unique and scrumptious take on the Southern treat—more like an English tea “biscuit” than fluffy American biscuits.

When Mimi died in 2009, Mary Martha was the only family member who knew how to make the savory cookies and keep the cheese biscuit tradition alive.

“I’m just a pretender,” she says. “I didn’t even know all the secrets.”

But Greene, a lobbyist for education issues who splits her time between her ancestral home in Beaufort and her house in Columbia, soldiered on, and *her* cheese biscuits became a hit. The crown was passed.

When Greene’s goddaughter Sally Key, fresh out of college, asked in 2018 for a primer on how to cook Greene’s favorites, Greene penned what would become *The Cheese Biscuit Queen Tells All*. To her surprise, the book was picked up for publication by University of South Carolina Press after a friend recommended it.

Greene’s first book tastily blended family recipes with engaging family stories. It, too, was a hit. In February, USC Press will release her second book, *The Cheese Biscuit Queen: Kiss My Aspic!*

As the title suggests, *Kiss My Aspic* expands on the storytelling to include spicy anecdotes from her battles as a lobbyist in the General Assembly, family quips and more than 80 new recipes. The book is also a plea for others to savor their own family recipes and stories for generations to come.

The first book “was a love letter to my Aunt Mimi,” Greene says. “I hope this book will encourage people to collect their family recipes and family stories and write them down. That’s how you keep the memories alive.”

—JEFF WILKINSON | PHOTO BY CRUSH RUSH



No need to knead

BY BELINDA SMITH-SULLIVAN

IRISH SODA BREAD

MAKES ONE LOAF

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups bread flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¾ cups buttermilk
- Softened unsalted butter, optional
- Honey, optional

Preheat oven to 425 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and sprinkle with flour.

In a stand mixer with the paddle attachment, add the flours, baking soda and salt and blend. Gradually add the buttermilk and thoroughly combine. Dough will be extremely sticky. Scrape the dough onto a baking sheet and, with lightly floured hands, shape into a round, about 2 inches tall. Score the top of dough with a big “X” about an inch deep using a lame or a sharp knife.

Bake in preheated oven 45–55 minutes until golden brown. The bread will have a hollow sound when tapped on the bottom crust. Transfer bread to a cooling rack and cool completely. Slice and serve smeared with butter and drizzled with honey, if desired.

Winter means more time spent indoors and more time to experiment with new recipes. For me, this colder season is a time to “up” my bread game. By regular standards, the following recipes are for complex yeast breads. But this *no-knead* method takes the complexity and work out of bread-making.



IULIA NEDRYGALOVA



GINA MOORE

STOUT BEER BREAD

MAKES ONE LOAF

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 12 ounces stout beer, or ale or lager | 1½ teaspoons salt |
| 2 ounces water, or 2 more ounces beer | ¾ cups bread flour |
| ¼ teaspoon instant yeast | |

In a large bowl add the beer, water and yeast and stir. Add salt and stir once more (mixture will foam, but that is a natural occurrence). Add flour and, using the handle of a wooden spoon, stir mixture until blended and pulling away from the sides. Scrape down the sides of the bowl to make sure all the flour is incorporated. Cover with plastic wrap and allow dough to rest for 12–18 hours at room temperature, about 70 degrees. If your kitchen is cooler than normal, put bowl in the microwave to rest.

Lightly flour a clean work surface and pour dough onto it. Sprinkle the dough and fingers with a little more flour and pat the dough down slightly. Roll and shape the dough into a ball or oblong loaf, depending on shape of the baking vessel being used. Generously spray vessel and place dough inside, seam side down. Cover dough and let proof 30–60 minutes until doubled in size and it does not readily spring back when poked with a finger. Score the top of dough in desired pattern using a lame or a sharp knife.

While dough is proofing, preheat oven to 400 F and place rack in lower third of the oven. When dough is finished proofing, bake for 40 minutes with lid on; remove lid and bake an additional 10–15 minutes until golden brown. Transfer to a cooling rack and cool completely.

GREEK RUSTIC VILLAGE BREAD (HORIATIKO PSOMI)

MAKES ONE LOAF

- 4 cups bread flour
- 1 teaspoon instant yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 12 ounces water
- 1 tablespoon olive oil

In a large bowl, add flour, yeast, salt and sugar and whisk to combine ingredients. Make a well in the flour and add water and olive oil. Stir, using the handle of a wooden spoon, until blended. The dough will be shaggy and sticky but will pull away from the sides of the bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic film and let dough rest 12 to 18 hours at room temperature, about 70 degrees. If your kitchen is cooler than normal, put bowl in the microwave to rest. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles.

Lightly flour a clean work surface and pour dough onto it. Sprinkle the dough with a little more flour, pat the dough down slightly, and fold the dough over onto itself two to three times. Cover loosely with plastic film and let it rest for another 15 minutes. Using just enough flour to keep dough from sticking to the surface or your fingers, gently shape it into a ball. Generously coat a large piece of parchment paper with flour or cornmeal. Place dough, seam side down, on the parchment and cover with a cotton tea towel. Let rise another 2 hours. Dough will double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger. Score the top of dough in desired pattern using a lame or a sharp knife.

At least 30 minutes before dough is finished proofing, preheat oven to 450 F. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy pot—Dutch oven or deep cast-iron pot—into oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven and place dough on parchment into the pot. Replace the lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 minutes until loaf is golden brown. Remove from pot and cool, right side up, on a cooling rack.



CHEF'S TIPS

Bread flour versus all-purpose flour. The difference between bread flour and all-purpose is the amount of protein. Bread flour has a higher protein content, which means the gluten will be more developed, thus you will get a higher rise in your finished bread. All-purpose flour is interchangeable in all these recipes.

Instant yeast versus active dry yeast. Instant yeast does not require hydration and can be added directly to the flour and salt ingredients. Active dry yeast must be activated in water before adding to the other dry ingredients. Instant yeast requires fewer steps and is virtually foolproof.

What is a lame? A blade used to score or slash the top of dough before it goes into the oven. The purpose of scoring the dough is to control the expansion and to prevent the dough from cracking.

What's cooking at
SCLiving.coop/food/chefbelinda

NEED MORE but don't want to knead? Find more of Chef Belinda's no-knead bread recipes and tips, including when to use what kind of baking vessel, online.



GWENAELE VOT



KAREN HERMANN

WALNUT BREAD

MAKES ONE LOAF

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 2½ cups bread flour | 1¾ cups water |
| ½ cup whole wheat flour | 1 cup walnut halves, roughly chopped |
| ½ teaspoon instant yeast | |
| 1¼ teaspoons salt | |

Preheat oven to 350 F. On a small baking sheet, roast nuts for 15–20 minutes, stirring halfway through until lightly browned. Set aside to cool.

In a large bowl, add flours, yeast and salt and whisk to combine ingredients. Make a well in the flour and add water and stir, using the handle of a wooden spoon, until blended. Fold in the walnuts until well distributed. The dough will be shaggy and sticky but will pull away from the sides of the bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic film and let dough rest 12 to 18 hours at room temperature, about 70 degrees. If your kitchen is cooler than normal, put bowl in the microwave to rest. Dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles.

Lightly flour a clean work surface and pour dough onto it. Sprinkle the dough and your fingers with a little more flour; pat the dough down slightly. Using a bench scraper, fold the dough over onto itself several times until it starts to form a ball. Generously coat a large piece of parchment paper with flour or cornmeal. Place dough, seam side down, on the parchment and sprinkle with a little more flour. Cover with a cotton tea towel. Let rise another 2 hours. Dough will double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger. Score the top of dough in desired pattern using a lame or a sharp knife.

At least 30 minutes before dough is finished proofing, preheat oven to 450 F. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy pot—Dutch oven or deep cast-iron pot—into oven as it heats. When dough is ready, carefully remove pot from oven and place dough on parchment into the pot. Replace the lid and bake 30 minutes, then remove lid and bake another 15 minutes until loaf is golden brown. Remove from pot and cool, right side up, on a cooling rack.



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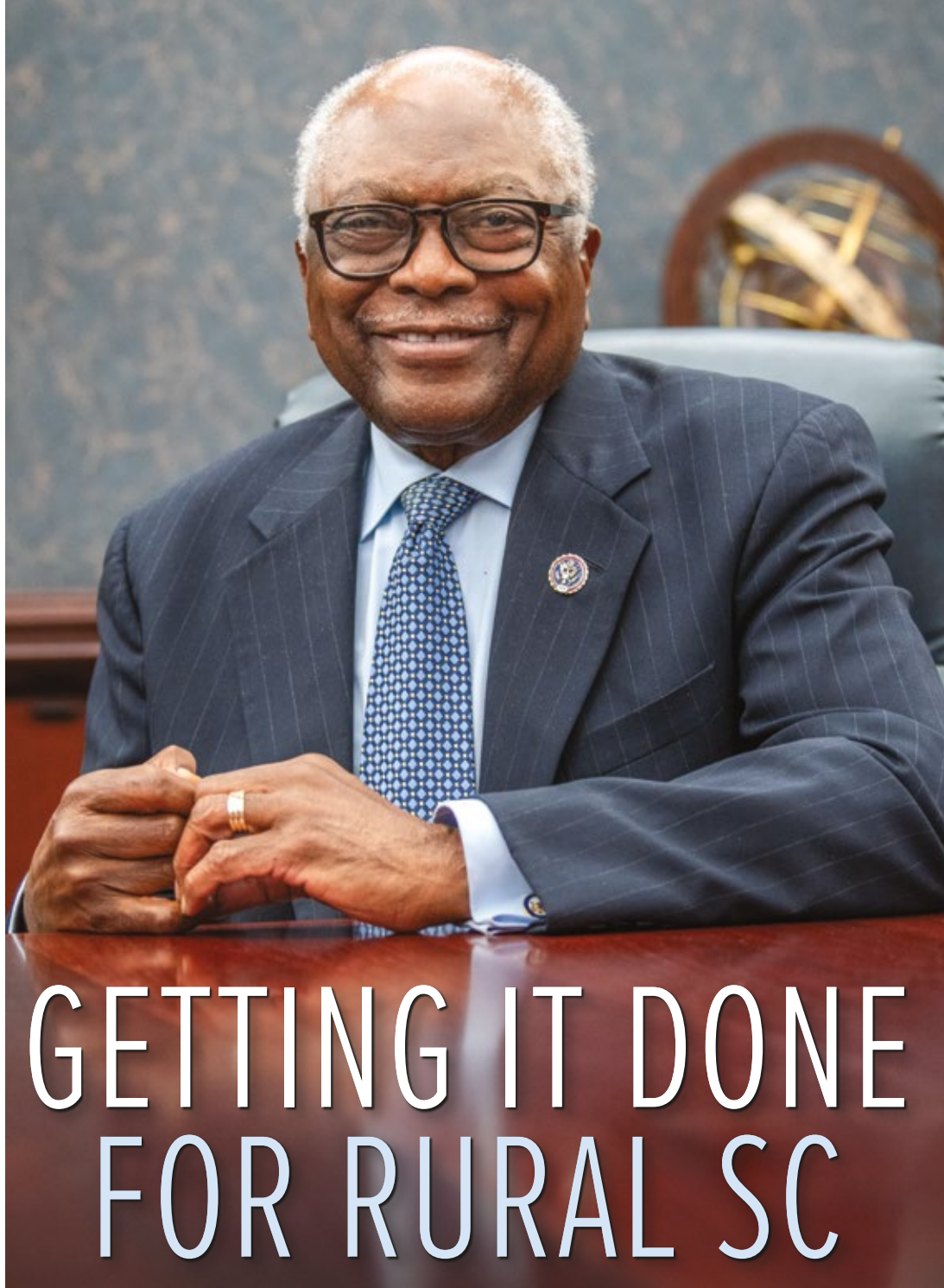
6 University of South Carolina

7 Hampton-Preston Mansion & Gardens

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How Rep. Jim Clyburn became rural South Carolina's champion on Capitol Hill

BY AVERY G. WILKS

One of Jim Clyburn's earliest lessons in politics came at church.

As a teenager, the future congressman watched his father, a minister, face a challenger to his reelection as president of the church's board of elders. The room was split, and a tie vote sparked confusion. When Clyburn's father rose to remind the elders that he held the tiebreaking vote as president, the matter seemed settled.

Then the elder Clyburn did something no one expected: He cast the deciding vote for his opponent.

On the drive home, the younger Clyburn was devastated and perplexed. His father explained himself.



ESTEEMED ICON A photo of educator, philanthropist and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune, a native of Mayesville, S.C., holds a place of honor in Jim Clyburn's Washington, D.C., office.

DENNY GAINER, NRECA

"When things are this divided," the elder Clyburn said, "nobody can lead."

Over the following year, Clyburn's father regained the church elders' support. He won the next election and every other after that until he retired.

The episode taught Clyburn the value of pragmatism and persistence, traits that would define his storied six-decade career in politics and public service.

The lesson stuck, fueling Clyburn's involvement in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, his continued runs for elected office even after three early defeats, his eventual election as South Carolina's first Black congressman in almost a century, and his rise to the third-highest position in the U.S. House of Representatives.

It helps explain how Clyburn, 84, has become a political bellwether, an adviser to presidents, and a Capitol Hill powerbroker with a knack for securing the federal support necessary to bring South Carolina projects to life—often in the rural areas that electric cooperatives serve.

In a tribute to Clyburn's legendary effectiveness and service to rural South Carolina, the state's electric cooperatives recently voted to honor him with their highest honor, the Electric Cooperative Outstanding Public Service Award.

"For over 50 years, this guy has had our back," says Mike Couick, CEO of The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina. "He's always been there for rural people."

Dreamer to leader

To better understand what drives Clyburn's service, start at the beginning.

Clyburn grew up in segregated Sumter, South Carolina, born in 1940 to parents who grounded him in faith and civic

engagement. Clyburn and his siblings were required to recite a new Bible verse at breakfast every morning. At night, after finishing their homework, they had to share a current event they had read about in the newspaper.

His parents, Enos and Almeta Clyburn, filled him with hope for a future with opportunities they never had. Clyburn grew up hearing his father pray for the petitioners in *Briggs v. Elliott*, a 1952 Supreme Court case that challenged school segregation in Summerton, just a county over. They posted messages about voter registration on their front door and made sure visitors left with plans to participate at the ballot box.

Once, a family friend discouraged Clyburn from telling anyone about his dreams of working in politics and government, saying it wasn't safe for a Black child to voice such aspirations. That evening, Clyburn's mother pulled him aside and urged him not to listen.

"Things are going to change," Clyburn recalls her saying, "and you're going to be able to live your dreams."

Of course, Clyburn's parents also equipped him with the skills he would need.

Clyburn's father taught him Robert's Rules of Order and the art of public speaking. On Sunday mornings, Clyburn studied the congregation's faces as his father delivered the sermon. He noted which stories moved the audience and how his father stirred their emotions with the rise and fall of his baritone.

Activism came naturally to Clyburn. At 12, he was elected president of the NAACP's Sumter youth chapter. At South Carolina State College, his classmates relied on him to organize nonviolent civil rights demonstrations that often landed him in jail. (In fact, jail is where Clyburn met his future wife, Emily, a fellow South Carolina State student who

**WORKHORSE AT WORK**

Jim Clyburn and his communications director, Jami LaRue, take advantage of a quiet moment to confer.

DENNY GAINER, NRECA

“For over 50 years, this guy has had our back. He’s always been there for rural people.”

—MIKE COUICK, CEO OF THE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES OF SOUTH CAROLINA

brought Clyburn a hamburger and shared it with him.)

“He was serious about doing what was right,” says Willie Jeffries, a Tri-County Electric Cooperative trustee and Clyburn’s college classmate.

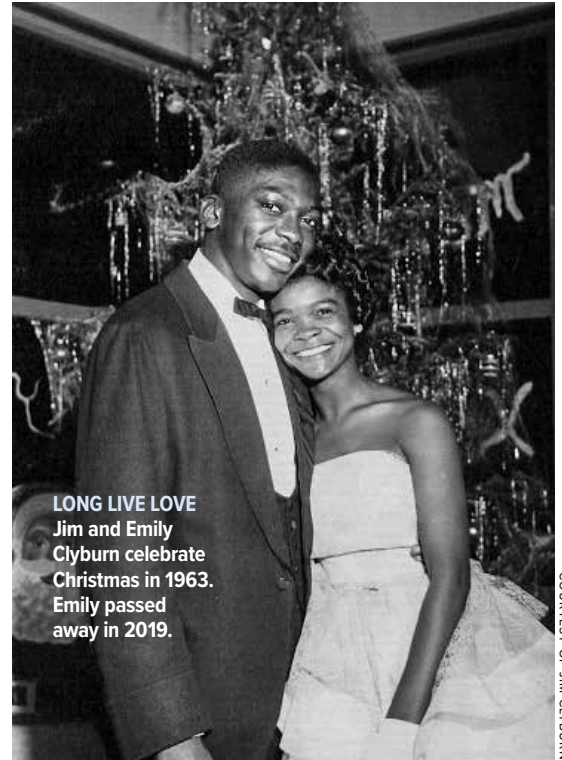
After school, Clyburn remained rooted in politics and service. He moved to Charleston and taught high school history, worked as an employment counselor, directed two youth and community development programs and led a program for migrant and seasonal farm workers. He ran for the state House of Representatives in 1970, losing narrowly but impressing newly elected South Carolina Gov. John West in the process.

West hired Clyburn as an aide and took him under his wing. They shared an interest in improving life in South Carolina’s rural communities and partnered with the state’s electric cooperatives to create a program—colloquially known



COURTESY OF JIM CLYBURN

BOUND BY A MOVEMENT Clyburn was a longtime friend and colleague of the late Civil Rights icon U.S. Rep. John Lewis, pictured left. Clyburn led nonviolent demonstrations at South Carolina State College in the 1960s.

**LONG LIVE LOVE**

Jim and Emily Clyburn celebrate Christmas in 1963. Emily passed away in 2019.

COURTESY OF JIM CLYBURN

as “John’s Johns”—that installed prefabricated snap-on bathrooms in homes without indoor plumbing.

Later, West appointed Clyburn as the state’s Human Affairs Commissioner, leading a state agency that investigated cases of employment discrimination.

Clyburn held the post for 18 years. Over that span, he ran twice for statewide office, losing both times but gaining valuable experience. When a new, mostly Democratic congressional district was created ahead of the 1992 election, Clyburn was ready.

It took 52 years, but Clyburn fulfilled the lifelong dream his mother had encouraged him to pursue—winning election to Congress.

‘Always be a workhorse’

A few years after Clyburn arrived in Washington, D.C., House Democrats were in a bind. A Republican congressman who switched parties and became a Democrat had negotiated a deal with Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt to stay on the House Appropriations Committee. But no seat was available.

Like his father so many years before, Clyburn made a surprising move. He offered to give up his seat. All his Democratic colleagues had to do in return was fulfill his long list of priorities and budget requests for his constituents in South Carolina.

“I got everything funded on that list and never had to go to a single meeting,” Clyburn recalls now with a grin.



COURTESY OF JIM CLYBURN

DEEP-FRIED POLITICS Jim Clyburn has hosted an election-season fish fry, pictured here in 2007, for some three decades. The “world famous” event is a must-stop for Democratic presidential hopefuls.

It’s one of countless examples where Clyburn has proved a savvy operator in the nation’s capital, a master tactician who knows how to pass legislation and secure funding for important South Carolina projects.

Former Clyburn aides say the congressman makes an extraordinary effort to get to know his colleagues in the House of Representatives, their districts and the congressional staffers who support them.

When Clyburn needs to build support for his proposals, he can explain exactly how his idea will benefit a colleague’s district, says Jaime Harrison, a former Clyburn aide who served as chairman of the Democratic National Committee for the past four years. Then he allows them to share the credit for his work, Harrison says.

“In Washington, D.C., there are showhorses and workhorses,” Harrison recalls Clyburn advising him. “Always be a workhorse.”

Slow and steady

In the late 2000s, when South Carolina’s electric cooperatives were looking for a way to shrink low-income members’ power bills and reduce systemwide energy consumption, they found an enthusiastic partner in Clyburn.

Together, they developed the Rural Energy Savings Program, providing no-interest loans to transform leaky, power-guzzling old houses into energy-efficient homes.

The program started as a small pilot with a few South Carolina cooperatives, but Clyburn pushed for its funding and expansion. He testified before Congress, sharing testimonials of co-op members who had saved hundreds of dollars a month with energy efficiency upgrades.

It took half a decade, but he ultimately succeeded, getting the program funded through the 2014 Farm Bill and paving the way for improvements to thousands of rural homes across South Carolina and the country.

“Congressman Clyburn, just through his sheer force of will

“In Washington, D.C., there are showhorses and workhorses. Always be a workhorse.”

—JIM CLYBURN’S ADVICE TO FORMER AIDE AND FOUR-YEAR DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE CHAIR JAIME HARRISON



DENNY GAINER, NRECA

STEADINESS OVER SPEED Inspired by the fable of the tortoise and the hare, Clyburn keeps a collection of turtle figurines in his congressional office.

and determination, took that idea that was homegrown in South Carolina and turned it into a national law,” former aide Mike Hacker recalls.

The Rural Energy Savings Program remains one of Clyburn’s favorite legislative accomplishments, a testament to the persistence that has become his superpower on Capitol Hill.

Major breakthroughs rarely occur overnight in Congress. Rather, they often take years of pushing and prodding, of incremental gains and disappointing setbacks.

It’s no wonder Clyburn draws inspiration from the fable of the tortoise and the hare. He even collects figurines of turtles, his favorite animal, and displays them throughout his congressional office.

Clyburn had to embrace the slow-but-steady approach



COURTESY OF GOV. HENRY MCMASTER

A WIN FOR SOUTH CAROLINIANS S.C. Gov. Henry McMaster, left, and Clyburn, pictured together in 2022, collaborated to deploy funding for broadband internet expansion across rural areas of the state. Despite their partisan differences, McMaster praises Clyburn's partnership.

with another of his major accomplishments, the development of the Lake Marion Regional Water Agency.

Not long after joining Congress, Clyburn realized the state's Interstate 95 corridor needed a clean water supply to improve health outcomes and attract economic development.

He has spent the past two decades spearheading the water system's development and nurturing its growth. It's making a huge difference in rural communities that historically were left behind, former state Sen. John Matthews says.

He added that without Clyburn and the hundreds of millions of federal dollars he secured, the project would have gone nowhere.

"We only had a vision and no money," Matthews says. "He put the money behind the vision, and that made it a reality."

Making it happen

Perhaps Clyburn's greatest impact on the day-to-day lives of rural South Carolinians has been his work on expanding broadband internet access.

Nearly a decade ago, when Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative in Lexington began exploring the possibility of providing high-speed internet service, Clyburn offered his support.

"When everybody else was saying 'no,' he recognized there was a need, and a need for funding," the co-op's CEO, Bob Paulling, remembers.

Long before COVID-19 laid bare the scarcity of high-speed internet access in rural areas, Clyburn instructed his staff to study the issue. He worked with state officials to explore funding opportunities. He also met with electric co-op leaders, pressing them to deploy internet fiber across their existing power poles.

Clyburn bent the ears of congressional leaders and even President Joe Biden, telling them of a town in his district where high schoolers gathered at McDonald's to do their homework because nowhere else had service. He worked with

Republican Gov. Henry McMaster to ensure the state was ready when federal money for rural broadband expansion began flowing.

When the moment came, South Carolina was off to a significant head start.

Over the past four years, providers have connected more than 300,000 homes and businesses to high-speed internet, turning the Palmetto State into a national model for deploying broadband. In fact, according to internet speed-test firm Ookla, South Carolina recently became the country's first and only state with a negative digital divide—meaning rural communities have better access to high-speed internet than urban areas.

"We're making great progress, and it would not have happened without Jim Clyburn," says McMaster, who enjoys collaborating with the congressman despite their partisan differences.

Clyburn describes his work with South Carolina's electric cooperatives on broadband, energy efficiency and other issues over the years as "one of the best partnerships I've ever had."

Cooperative leaders couldn't agree more.

When federal funding magically falls into place or government roadblocks mysteriously resolve, Tri-County Electric Cooperative CEO Chad Lowder says it's usually safe to assume Clyburn has been at work behind the scenes.

"For as much stuff that gets done, I know that he's made a phone call to help it," Lowder says.

Employing the strategic wit and resolve he observed in his father so many decades before, Clyburn has ascended into the country's highest echelons of power and leveraged his influence to improve life in rural South Carolina. Over 31 years in Congress, Clyburn has cemented himself as one of the most effective statesmen in South Carolina's history—someone who again and again delivers what's needed to transform lofty ideas into reality.

"When he was involved," McMaster says of Clyburn, "I knew it was going to happen." ☺



2025–2026

LEGISLATIVE DIRECTORY

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each legislator's name is followed by his or her district number and the counties he or she serves, along with contact information.

State Senate and House offices are on the State Capitol grounds. State Senate offices are in the Gressette Building. State House offices are in the Blatt Building.

All information is current as of Jan. 20, 2025, but is subject to change without notice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We extend our grateful appreciation to South Carolina lawmakers for their cooperation in the creation of this directory.

NEED REPRINTS?



Due to overwhelming demand for this directory issue, *South Carolina Living* can only supply a limited number of extra copies

for schools and civic groups. To request additional copies or download a free PDF version, visit SCLiving.coop/2025-2026-legislative-guide.

The Co-op Commitment

ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES HAVE SERVED the people of South Carolina since the 1930s. For over eight decades, cooperatives have improved their communities through economic development, community investment and continuous innovation.

South Carolina's electric cooperatives deliver dependable electricity to roughly 2 million residents in all 46 counties. Cooperatives maintain more than 80,000 miles of power line that serve 70% of the state's land mass.

Cooperatives are owned and governed by their consumer-members. Each cooperative's members elect a board of trustees from among the membership. These boards represent their fellow members by setting rates and policies that empower the cooperative to deliver electricity as safely, affordably, reliably and responsibly as possible.

Our statewide association, The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, is committed to those same priorities because it is owned and governed by the local cooperatives. The cooperatives formed ECSC in 1941 to offer certain services more efficiently by sharing resources. ECSC provides its member cooperatives with lineworker and employee training as well as government relations, legal and communications services. ECSC's board consists of two members—a CEO and a trustee—from each of its 18 member cooperatives.

Electric cooperatives are grateful to S.C. legislators for their service to their constituents and our state. We pledge to continue to be partners with them as we all work to make our state a better place to live and work. If we can be of service, please contact us.



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WRITTEN IN 1787, RATIFIED IN 1788, and in effect since 1789, the United States Constitution is the world's longest-surviving written charter of government. Its first three words—"We the People"—affirm that the government exists to serve its citizens. The supremacy of the people through their elected representatives is recognized in Article I, which creates a Congress consisting of a Senate and a House of Representatives. The positioning of Congress at the beginning of the Constitution reaffirms its status as the first branch of the federal government.

The Senate is composed of two senators from each state, elected by voters, for six-year terms.

Under the Constitution, each state is entitled to at least one representative in the House.

Additional House seats are apportioned on the basis of the state's population. Congress fixes the size of the House of Representatives and the procedure of apportioning the number among the states. Each state is apportioned its number of representatives by means of the Department of Commerce's decennial census. South Carolina has seven representatives elected by voters to serve two-year terms.

NOTE: All information is current as of Jan. 20, 2025, but is subject to change without notice.

U.S. House



Nancy Mace [R]
1ST DISTRICT
Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester & Jasper Cos.
1728 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3176
Website: mace.house.gov



South Carolina congressional districts



Joe Wilson [R]
2ND DISTRICT
Aiken, Barnwell, Lexington, Orangeburg & Richland Cos.
1436 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-2452
Website: joewilson.house.gov



Ralph Norman [R]
5TH DISTRICT
Cherokee, Chester, Fairfield, Kershaw, Lancaster, Lee, Spartanburg, Sumter, Union & York Cos.
569 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5501
Website: norman.house.gov



Sheri Biggs [R]
3RD DISTRICT
Abbeville, Anderson, Edgefield, Greenville, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, Oconee, Pickens & Saluda Cos.
1530 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5301
Website: sheribiggs.house.gov



James Clyburn [D]
6TH DISTRICT
Allendale, Bamberg, Calhoun, Charleston, Clarendon, Colleton, Dorchester, Florence, Hampton, Jasper, Orangeburg, Richland, Sumter & Williamsburg Cos.
274 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-3315
Website: clyburn.house.gov



William Timmons [R]
4TH DISTRICT
Greenville & Spartanburg Cos.
267 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-6030
Website: timmons.house.gov



Russell Fry [R]
7TH DISTRICT
Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Georgetown, Horry, Marion & Marlboro Cos.
345 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-9895
Website: fry.house.gov

GOVERNOR



Henry D. McMaster [R]
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 800 Richland St., Columbia, 29201
Office of the Governor
 1100 Gervais St., Columbia, 29201
 (803) 734-2100
 Website: governor.sc.gov

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



Pamela Evette [R]
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THE SOUTH CAROLINA EXECUTIVE BRANCH includes the governor, lieutenant governor and seven constitutional officers. All serve four-year terms. The governor is the chief magistrate with supreme executive authority. The lieutenant governor assumes the position of governor if the governor is incapacitated. The secretary of state is responsible for the statewide registration of corporations, uniform commercial code interests, business opportunities, employment agencies, trademarks and notaries. The state treasurer is responsible for the receipt, investment and disbursement of all public funds for the state. The attorney general heads the state legal department. The comptroller general is the state's chief fiscal officer and fiscal watchdog. The superintendent of education leads a system to enable students to become educated, responsible and contributing citizens. The adjutant general heads the state's military department. The commissioner of agriculture promotes and nurtures the growth and development of South Carolina's agriculture industry.

NOTE: All information is current as of Jan. 20, 2025, but is subject to change without notice.

CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS



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S.C. Senate

Senators' offices are in the Gressette Building, Columbia.

(H) Home district
(O) Columbia office

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY crafts South Carolina state laws and consists of two bodies: the South Carolina House of Representatives and the South Carolina Senate. There are 124 members of the S.C. House, who are elected every two years, and 46 members of the S.C. Senate, who are elected every four years, concurrent with the United States presidential election. The legislature convenes at the State House in Columbia from the second Tuesday in January until the second Thursday in May. The session may be extended if the House fails to pass a budget by March 31, or the BEA submits a forecast reduction, or by a vote of both bodies.



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S.C. House of Representatives

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(C) Columbia office



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NOTE: The District 50 seat representing parts of Kershaw, Lee and Sumter counties and District 113 seat representing parts of Charleston County are vacant as of press time and expected to be filled by special elections in 2025.

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How to reach your legislators

Writing an email or letter to your legislator is the most effective way to communicate your support, concern or interest in an issue before the General Assembly. As you begin this process, consider the following tips:

- 1) Take a little extra time to **educate yourself** on the topic you wish to address.
- 2) When you write, **identify yourself** and your status as a constituent.
- 3) **Be specific.** Use bill numbers and state your position plainly.
- 4) **Use examples** that illustrate how the issue affects your local area.
- 5) **Be respectful.** Use appropriate greetings, such as "Dear Senator Smith" or "Dear Representative Jones."
- 6) Provide a way for your legislator to respond by including **your mailing address or email address.**
- 7) Even if you disagree with a lawmaker's position, end your correspondence by **thanking them** for their service.



Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) essentially functions as a court for cases involving utilities and other regulated companies. The PSC has broad jurisdiction over matters pertaining to the investor-owned electric and gas utility companies, water and wastewater companies, telecommunications companies, motor carriers of household goods, hazardous waste disposal, and taxicabs.

Utility regulation in South Carolina had its beginning with the passage of an act by the 1878 General Assembly, creating a commission for the purpose of regulating railroads operating within the state. In 1910, the General Assembly established a Public Service Commission, empowering it with the authority to “fix and establish in all cities of the State rates and charges for the supply of water, gas or electricity furnished by any person, firm or corporation to such cities, the inhabitants thereof, and to proscribe penalties.” In 2005, the PSC began operating as a restructured, quasi-judicial body, as prescribed by Act 175 of 2004. Under the new law, the PSC’s principal duty is to hear cases involving the state’s regulated utilities, while the Office of Regulatory Staff is responsible for many of the non-adjudicative functions associated with utility regulation.

A joint session of the General Assembly elects the PSC for a term of four years, with one commissioner from each of the seven congressional districts. The PSC’s staff is composed of the administrative staff, advisory staff, docketing staff and legal staff.

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DISTRICT 2



Stephen “Mike” Caston

DISTRICT 3



Headen B. Thomas

DISTRICT 5

DISTRICT 4

Vacant as of press time

Office of Regulatory Staff

The Office of Regulatory Staff (ORS) represents the public interest of South Carolina in utility regulation. The agency fulfills its mission by representing the concerns of the using and consuming public with respect to public utility services and preservation of continued investment in and maintenance of utility facilities so as to provide reliable and high quality utility services.

Act 175 of 2004 created the ORS as part of an initiative to provide a revised structure for addressing the public interest in utility regulation. This revised structure clearly separates the adjudicative function—which belongs to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina (PSC)—from the investigative, legal, prosecutorial and educational roles necessary for utility regulation. Specifically, the ORS has sole responsibility for the inspection, auditing, and examination of public utilities. The agency must be considered a party of record in all filings, applications or proceedings before the PSC.

The utilities and industries that fall under the regulatory purview of the ORS are as follows: telecommunications, investor-owned electric, natural gas, water/wastewater and transportation.

The ORS has responsibility for oversight of railroad safety and natural gas pipeline safety in South Carolina, as well as limited oversight authority over electric cooperatives and municipal systems. Further, the South Carolina Utilities Consumer Advocate, housed in Consumer Affairs, is responsible for monitoring South Carolina utilities as well as representing and providing protection for the ratepayer. The Energy Office, the principal energy-planning entity for the state, became part of the ORS in 2015.

South Carolina's Broadband Office, which is a part of the ORS, is the central broadband planning body for South Carolina and coordinates with federal, state, regional, local, and private entities to encourage the development of access to broadband. The Broadband Office also serves as a central resource to collect and publish information about state and federal programs to fund broadband expansion.

The agency is organized as follows:

- ▶ Administration
- ▶ Auditing
- ▶ Broadband
- ▶ Consumer Affairs
- ▶ Energy Policy
- ▶ Human Resources
- ▶ Information Services
- ▶ Legal
- ▶ Safety, Transportation, and Emergency Response
- ▶ Telecommunications
- ▶ Utility Rates & Services

CONTACT

General information: (803) 737-0800

Website: ors.sc.gov

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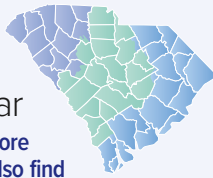
Andrew Bateman

Acting Executive Director

(803) 737-8440

ABateman@ors.sc.gov





Upstate

FEBRUARY

21–23 Southern Home & Garden Show, Greenville Convention Center, Greenville. (864) 254-0133 or southernhomeandgardenshow.com.

22 Meals on Wheels Greenville Sweetheart Charity Ball, Greenville Convention Center, Greenville. mealsonwheelsgreenville.org.

22 Tell Me Lies: Fleetwood Mac Tribute, Abbeville Opera House, Abbeville. (864) 366-9673.

28 Della Mae in concert, Chapman Cultural Center, Spartanburg. spartanburgphilharmonic.org.

MARCH

8 Music on the Mountain, Table Rock State Park, Pickens. (864) 878-9813.

8–9 Southern Author Fest, Hughes Main Library, Greenville. (864) 527-9258 or greenvillelibrary.org.

13–15 Landrum Quilters 2025 Quilt Show, Landrum Farmers Market, Landrum. landrumquilters.com.

13–30 Cabaret, Centre Stage, Greenville. (864) 233-6733 or centrestage.org.

15 Kidsfest, Hagood Mill Historic Site, Pickens. (864) 898-2936 or visitthagoodmill.com.

16 Bell Fest, Devils Fork State Park, Salem. (864) 944-2639 or upcountrysc.com.

19 Exhibition opening—Bob Ray: Suit Yourself, Greenville County Museum of Art, Greenville. (864) 271-7570 or gcma.org.

21–23, 28–30 Mean Girls JR., Mauldin Cultural Center, Mauldin. (864) 335-4862 or mauldinculturalcenter.org.

28–30 Reedy Reels Film Festival, South Carolina Children's Theatre, Greenville. reedyreels.com.

29–30 Spring Fling Open Horse Show, T. Ed Garrison Arena, Pendleton. scupstateequine.com.

Midlands

FEBRUARY

20–23 Love, Loss & What I Wore, Arts Center of Kershaw County, Camden. (803) 425-7676 or artscenterkc.org.

21–March 22 Ain't Misbehavin', Trustus Theatre, Columbia. (803) 254-9732 or trustus.org.

22 Joy of Gardening Symposium: Enlightened Gardening, Gateway Conference Center, Richburg. symposium.yorkmg.org.

SCLiving.coop/calendar

Our mobile-friendly site lists even more festivals, shows and events. You'll also find instructions on submitting your event. Please confirm information with the hosting event before attending.

22 Wishful Shuckers Oyster Roast, The Coop, Columbia. tinyurl.com/muxrz57r.

22–23 Battle of Aiken, 1210 Powell Road, Aiken. battleofaiken.com.

22–23 Columbia Philatelic Society Winter Stamp and Postcard Show, Tri-City Leisure Center, West Columbia. (803) 309-2534 or columbiaphilately.com.

22–23 Gun and Knife Show, Jamil Temple, Columbia. (803) 463-9377 or scgunshows.com.

25 Newberry College Music Honors Recital, Newberry Opera House, Newberry. (803) 276-6264 or newberryoperahouse.com.

MARCH

1 Irish Fest Camden, 2203 Airline Drive, Camden. irishfestcamden.com.

1–2 Battle for Broxton Bridge Civil War Reenactment, Broxton Bridge Plantation, Erhardt. (803) 267-3883 or broxtonbridge.com.

6–16 Chicago, Chapin Theatre, Chapin. (803) 404-0015 or chapintheatre.org.

7–16 The 39 Steps: Comedy Play, Tom S. Gettys Courtroom, Rock Hill. (803) 326-7428 or rockhilltheatre.org.

7–22 Hairspray, Workshop Theatre, Columbia. (803) 799-4876 or workshoptheatreofsc.com.

8 Cottontown Art Crawl, Cottontown neighborhood, Columbia. cottontown.us/artcrawl.

14–16 Carolina Classic Home and Garden Show, South Carolina State Fairgrounds, Columbia. homeshowcolumbia.com.

15 Aiken Trials, Aiken Training Track, Aiken. (803) 648-4631 or aikentrainingtrack.com.

15 Blue Star Blitz Trail Races, Anne Springs Close Greenway, Fort Mill. (803) 547-4575 or asccgreenway.org.

15 Ramble Tamble: The Creedence Clearwater Revival Experience, Sumter Opera House, Sumter. (803) 436-2616 or sumteroperahouse.com.

15 St. Pat's in Five Points, Five Points, Columbia. stpatscolumbia.com.

21–22 Henry Shelor Sumter County Boy Scouts BBQ Cookoff, Sumter County Fairgrounds, Sumter. (803) 750-9868 or indianwaters.org.

22 Contemporaries Ball, The Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia. (803) 799-2810 or columbiamuseum.org.

22 Ellore Trials Event, Ellore Palmetto Jockey Club, Ellore. (803) 897-2616 or elloreetrials.com.

22 Reading with a Ranger: Remember the Ladies, Andrew Jackson State Park, Lancaster. (803) 285-3344.

22 Soiree on State, State Street, Cayce. soireeonstate.com.

27 Taste of Lake Murray, DoubleTree by Hilton, Columbia. (803) 781-5940 or lakemurraycountry.com.

28–30 Palmetto Sportsmen's Classic, South Carolina State Fairgrounds, Columbia. pscclassic.com.

29 Carolina Cup, Springdale Race Course, Camden. (803) 432-6513 or carolinacup.org.

29 Nature: The Survivor Series, Poinsett State Park, Wedgefield. (803) 349-4817.

29 Xtreme Xperience Car/Truck/Bike Show, Generations Park, Aiken. (803) 571-3630.

29–30 Read Freely Fest, Richland Library Main, Columbia. (803) 799-9084 or readfreelyfest.com.

Pee Dee & Lowcountry

FEBRUARY

17–23 Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival, various locations, Hilton Head Island. hiltonheadseafoodfestival.com.

19 Thresholds: A 3-Part Performance Experiment, The Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston. gibbesmuseum.org.

21 Edwin McCain, Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center, Florence. (843) 661-4444 or fmpac.org.

21 World Affairs Council of Hilton Head presents Barbara Slavin: Risks and Opportunities in Iran-U.S. Foreign Policy, First Presbyterian Church, Hilton Head Island. (843) 384-6758 or wachh.org.

22 Isle of Palms Polar Plunge, The Windjammer, Isle of Palms. (803) 772-1555 or so-sc.org/event/isle-of-palms.



MIC SMITH

AND THEY'RE OFF! The pounding of hooves will set your heart racing at the Ellore Trials on March 22.

22–23 Sea & Sand Festival, downtown, Folly Beach. visitfolly.com/sea-and-sand-festival.

23 Art Actually: A Gibbes Museum Family Day, The Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston. gibbesmuseum.org.

23 Page Island Oyster Roast, Hilton Head Page Island. outsidefoundation.org/benefit.

23 Lowcountry Food Bank Chef's Feast, Trident Technical College, North Charleston. (843) 747-8146 or lowcountryfoodbank.org.

26–March 16 The Glass Menagerie, Dock Street Theatre, Charleston. (843) 577-1183 or charlestonstage.com.

MARCH

2–3 Hilton Head Symphony presents Carl Orff: Carmina Burana, First Presbyterian Church, Hilton Head Island. (843) 842-2055 or hhsos.org.

5–9 Charleston Wine + Food Festival, various locations, Charleston. charlestonwineandfood.com.

6–8 National Shag Dance Championships, OD Beach & Golf Resort, North Myrtle Beach. shagnationals.com.

7–15 Be My Baby, Florence Little Theatre, Florence. (843) 662-3731 or florencelittletheatre.org.

8–9 Low Country Pow Wow and Cultural Festival, Millstone Landing, Hardeeville. (843) 384-5551.

8–16 Can-Am Days, various locations, Myrtle Beach. (843) 626-7444 or visitmyrtlebeach.com.

13–April 13 The Charleston Festival, downtown, Charleston. thecharlestonfestivalsc.org.

15 Hilton Head Irishfest Concert, Lowcountry Celebration Park, Hilton Head Island. (855) 287-7287 or hiltonheadireland.org.

15 North Myrtle Beach St. Patrick's Day Parade & Festival, Main Street, North Myrtle Beach. explorenorthmyrtlebeach.com.

15 Power Comicon, Florence Center, Florence. (843) 347-3477 or powercomicon.com.

16 Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade, Pope Avenue, Hilton Head Island. (855) 287-7287 or hiltonheadireland.org.

17 Charleston St. Patrick's Day Parade, King Street, Charleston. aohcharleston.com.

19 Live at the Gibbes: Tonya Nicole, The Gibbes Museum of Art, Charleston. gibbesmuseum.org.

20–22 South Carolina BBQ Shag Festival, 298 S. McAllister St., Hemmingway. scbbqshagfestival.com.

21–23 The Charleston Antiques Show, Charleston Festival Hall, Charleston. thecharlestonshow.com.

22 Mount Pleasant ArtFest, Towne Center, Mount Pleasant. (843) 884-8517 or experiencemountpleasant.com.

23–29 Hilton Head Island Wine & Food Festival, various locations, Hilton Head Island. hiltonheadwineandfood.com.

27–29 The Garden Club of Charleston House and Garden Tours, downtown, Charleston. thegardenclubofcharleston.org.

28–29 Waccamaw Sportsmen's Expo, downtown, Conway. (843) 248-6260 or conwayalive.com.

29 Birds of a Feather ... Toast Together, Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Ravenel. (843) 795-4386.

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FISH & GAME CHART

The Solunar forecast provides feeding and migration times. Major periods can bracket the peak by more than an hour, minor periods by a half-hour before and after.

	AM		PM	
	Minor	Major	Minor	Major
FEBRUARY				
15	7:14	1:05	7:34	1:24
16	7:59	1:49	8:19	2:09
17	8:44	2:34	9:05	2:54
18	9:30	3:19	9:52	3:41
19	10:17	4:06	10:40	4:29
20	11:06	4:53	11:30	5:18
21	11:55	5:42	—	6:08
22	12:19	6:32	12:46	6:59
23	1:09	7:23	1:37	7:51
24	2:00	8:14	2:28	8:42
25	2:50	9:04	3:18	9:32
26	3:41	9:54	4:08	10:21
27	4:31	10:44	4:57	11:10
28	5:22	11:06	5:47	—
MARCH				
1	6:15	12:03	6:40	12:27
2	7:10	12:58	7:36	1:23
3	8:08	1:55	8:35	2:22
4	9:09	2:55	9:37	3:23
5	10:11	3:56	10:40	4:26
6	11:12	4:57	11:42	5:27
7	—	5:56	12:11	6:26
8	12:37	6:52	1:06	7:20
9	2:29	8:43	2:56	9:10
10	3:17	9:30	3:42	9:55
11	4:02	10:13	4:25	10:37
12	4:43	10:54	5:05	11:16
13	5:23	11:34	5:44	11:54
14	6:03	—	6:23	12:13
15	6:44	12:35	7:04	12:54
16	7:27	1:17	7:48	1:38

DATA BY SOLUNAR SERVICES

TRAVEL ADVERTISERS

Don't miss out!



Act fast! The space deadline for our Spring & Summer Travel Guide is March 3

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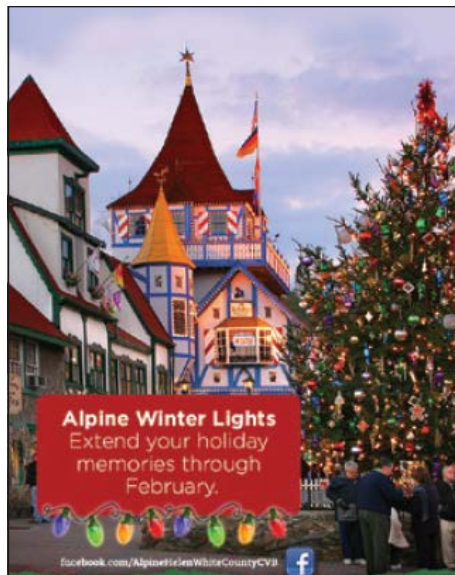


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FEBRUARY IN THE GARDEN

■ If you had any problems last year with your lawn mower, weed trimmer, tiller, leaf blower or other such motorized garden helpers, this is a good month to have them looked over, tuned up or repaired by qualified small-engine mechanics before they are swamped with springtime business.

■ Keep the bird feeder well stocked with seed, and, at least once a week, rinse and refill the bird bath with clean water. Your feathered friends will appreciate your extra efforts during these coldest days of winter!



L.A. JACKSON

GOING AU NATUREL Could the native bee balm (*Monarda didyma*) be a natural for your garden?

TIP OF THE MONTH Does the call of the wild have you thinking about adding native plants to your landscape this year? Need advice? Have a ton of questions? Let the South Carolina Native Plant Society help. Its seven chapters across the state will be quite active this growing season with lectures, demonstrations, field trips, symposiums and plant sales. To find out the when-and-where particulars of their coming activities, as well as to dive into the group's wealth of native plant information and resources, visit scnps.org.



L.A. JACKSON

Bright kalanchoe is a midwinter showoff

BY L.A. JACKSON

KALANCHOE IS A SUCCULENT PLANT that hails from the subtropics of Madagascar, which suggests it could be a popular showoff outdoors in the steamy heat of our South Carolina summers. Instead, it is usually found full of blooms in the winter at local nurseries, waiting to be taken home as a houseplant to sustain gardeners visually while they wait for the glory that will be yet another spring.

What gives?

Like the poinsettia with its subtropical origins, kalanchoe's flower development is set off by lessening sunlight and shorter days at the end of the year. This process normally takes about three months, meaning the blossoms are usually primed to pop from mid-winter to early spring.

And when a kalanchoe's blooms pop, they do it big time, covering the 12-inch-tall plant with long-lasting clusters of small, sprite-like, four-petaled blossoms in solid colors that vary in sassy shades of yellow, white, purple, pink and orange.

There are more than 100 species of kalanchoe, but the beauty typically found blooming in garden shops is *Kalanchoe blossfeldiana*. As a subtropical native-turned-houseplant, it does require certain conditions to not only survive but thrive. Top on the list is sunlight—the more you can pour on kalanchoe in the winter, the better. This means usually setting it in a south-facing window, but don't let the leaves

Kalanchoe blooms in many colors, spurred on by the shorter hours of sunlight in winter.

touch the glass because they could be bitten by bitter cold coming through the panes on freezing nights.

Kalanchoe is susceptible to root rot, but this bugaboo can be prevented by replanting in a slightly larger container with quality, well-draining potting soil that has been further fluffed up with a good dose of perlite. Also, only water the pot when the soil surface is dry to the touch. A diluted fertilizer solution can be included once a month in your irrigation routine during the spring and summer.

A vacation outside in the summer will please this warm-weather lover. Set it in a location under high shade away from direct afternoon sunlight because strong summer rays can scorch the leaves.

Give attention to kalanchoe-loving bad bugs such as scale, aphids and mealy bugs trying to besmirch your plant before you take it inside by early autumn for another sassy, cold-season bloom session. ☺

L.A. JACKSON is the former editor of Carolina Gardener magazine. Contact him at lajackson1@gmail.com.

Rise and schlep

BY JAN A. IGOE

FOR MOST OF MY LIFE, I have been surrounded—as in trapped, ambushed or held hostage—by morning people. Perky, peppy morning people whose primary purpose for existing is to make the nocturnal more miserable than we already are at 6 a.m.

It's not really their fault. When nature wires us up, everybody is assigned an internal clock. But you can't reset it, replace it or regift it. We're biologically compelled to strut around crowing at the first glimpse of dawn or doomed to be vampire bats in a world full of early worm catchers.

I've always done my best sleeping when it's time to rise and shine—or in my case, stumble and schlep—into another premature day. Years ago, to make sure I'd get to 8 a.m. classes on time, I'd strategically station five of the loudest alarm clocks I could find around my apartment. (There's strength in numbers.) Many of them got free flying lessons while I was semiconscious. Turns out that crash landing into unsuspecting walls will silence their buzzers just as well as the off button, but it gets expensive.

Finally, science has come to rescue the hard-of-waking. Ingenious inventor Simone Giertz, who dubs herself the “mistress of malfunctions,” has devised a state-of-the-art wake-up machine that has a synthetic rubber arm, attached to a rotating motor, that sits above your head. When morning arrives, the arm starts spinning and smacks you upside the head (at 165 revolutions per minute) until diving out of bed is a matter of survival.



We're biologically compelled to strut around crowing at the first glimpse of dawn or doomed to be vampire bats in a world full of early worm catchers.

Judging from all the duct tape, the wake-up machine is still in the prototype stage, but I found some other alarms to help pry that first eye open. The latest thinking is to get your body moving right away so your brain will follow. That's what the target alarm can do. It wakes you up Clint Eastwood-style.

This alarm features a small, round target over the clock. When the alarm sounds, you're supposed to grab the laser gun that came with it (unless you sleep packing) and shoot the bull's-eye to shut it up. If you can't get both eyes open simultaneously, have trouble finding your fingers or need trifocals to see who is in the mirror, the alarm will keep blaring

long enough to awaken most of the block.

I may try a Clocky first. It's an alarm clock sandwiched between two big wheels that leaps off your nightstand and runs around beeping (and possibly laughing) until you capture it. Clocky must be pretty quick, because one Amazon reviewer had to chase his all the way to the kitchen. If there's coffee waiting there, Clocky and I could be buds.

I've looked at other contraptions that make

you lift weights, answer test questions, jump on a floor pad or chase a flying propeller to turn the alarm off, but they all require mental and physical dexterity that some of us can't summon before noon.

There's a more extreme option I'm considering: electric shock. Pavlok makes a wristband to vibrate or zap the unwilling into consciousness. Since no one likes getting zapped, the device trains you to get up right away. It's the same premise as an electric fence that keeps dogs in their yard, but you don't have to wear a collar.

If any fellow vampires have been electrocuted or injured by any of these alarms, please let me know. We'll schlep on over to my attorney and start a class-action suit. Hopefully, they'll hear the case in night court.

EDITOR'S NOTE: South Carolina Living is reprinting some of Jan A. Igoe's previous columns. This “Humor Me” originally appeared in the November 2017 issue. Visit SCLiving.coop/news/in-memory-of-jan-igoe.



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