

# Senior News

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Story on page 8

May 2017  
Vol. 31, No. 5

# Were you born in 1952? Now Medicare is removing Social Security numbers to prevent identity theft – Look for your new card in 2018!

by KATHLEEN ERNCE  
Executive Director, The Senior  
Citizens Council Augusta, Georgia  
kernce@seniorcitizenscouncil.org

**A**t long last, first The Department of Defense and NOW MEDICARE to stop using Social Security numbers for identification in 2018 and will send new cards to patients with Medicare ID numbers! All I can say is it is LONG overdue and hopefully will help curb identity theft – the fastest growing crime in today’s society. The move was required by a law enacted two years ago and now the powers that be are trying to figure out a new numbering system.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently updated its web page to prepare the health care

providers for the change. The agency plans to begin mailing the new cards with Medicare beneficiary identifiers (MBIs) in April, 2018. During the transition period 2018 - 2019, providers can use the MBIs or health insurance claim numbers (which are based on Social Security numbers) on transactions such as billing and claims.

In the 2015 law, the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act, required CMS to remove Social Security numbers from Medicare cards by April 2019. According to a spokesperson for the agency, “We are now making decisions to find the best way to mail the cards. We’ll keep you posted about critical information so you can be ready to ask your Medicare patients at the time of service if they have a new card with an MBI.”

CMS plans a “wide-scale outreach” to let beneficiaries

know that they need to bring their new Medicare cards when they get care and how to get MBIs if they lose their cards.

AARP’s Fraud Watch Network ambassador, Frank Abagnale, advises consumers not to share Social Security numbers unnecessarily. “And

don’t carry your Medicare card unless you are on your way to a health care appointment,” he wrote last year. Instead, make a copy and black out all but the last four digits.”

source: AARP, March 17, 2017 newsletter



Kathleen Ernce

## Columbia County Chamber announces new Vice President

Special to Senior News  
Evans, Georgia (March 29, 2017)

**T**he Columbia County Chamber is pleased to announce its recent hire of Andy Mueller, who joined the Chamber team as Vice President on March 13. Within his new role, Mueller will oversee member development, events and communication efforts.

“I am thrilled to have been selected to join the Columbia County Chamber team of dedicated professionals, engaged board, and thriving membership as your Vice President,” Mueller said. “My family and I are extremely excited to make the change from the fast paced California lifestyle to the charm and quality lifestyle of Georgia.

“We look forward to begin our new adventures and become part of the Columbia County communities and explore the many opportunities of involvement, recreation, growth and historic areas in the region.”

Mueller has been in the Chamber profession since 2001 upon graduation from California State University San Marcos with a BA in History. Over the years, he has worked with three diverse California Chamber of Commerce organizations, including the 750 member San Marcos Chamber of Commerce as the Director of Operations, the 1000 member 5-Star Accredited Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce as the Vice President of Communications, and recently as the Executive Director for the 200 member Cathedral City Chamber of Commerce.

“We are excited to welcome Andy to our team,” said

Tammy Shepherd, President-CEO. “He brings an abundance of talent and Chamber experience that will allow us to better serve our members and achieve our mission.”

His experience has landed him as a speaker and coordinator at regional Chamber conferences and he has been an adviser to other local chambers and their staff when needed. He has also obtained his U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute of Organizational Management Certification (IOM) and in 2016 earned his Master’s Degree in Public Administration.

The Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is a five-star accredited chamber representing over 1,000 businesses in the Greater Augusta area. As a member driven, business focused organization, the vision of the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce is to ensure and promote the beneficial growth of our community. For more information on the Columbia County Chamber, visit [www.columbiacounty-chamber.com](http://www.columbiacounty-chamber.com).



Andy Mueller



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## **Taking Care**

# Experiencing Information Overload? Check Out These Record-Keeping Tips

by LISA M. PETSCHÉ

**A**s caregiver to a frail senior relative, one of your challenges involves managing a



Lisa Petsche

wealth of information relevant to his or her health and well-being. This includes medical, financial, legal and other important details.

It's easy to become overwhelmed by all the data there is to keep track of, such as schedules, appointments, due dates, identification numbers, names, locations and phone numbers of health care professionals, and so on. The resulting disorganization may lead to missed appointments or unnecessary expenses, among other consequences.

On the other hand, keeping information organized and centralized makes it quick and easy to access, saving you time and energy and avoiding frustration. It also facilitates communication with service providers, ensuring timely, thorough and accurate sharing of key information. In addition, a good record-keeping system helps ensure continuity of care when you take breaks from caregiving, and also in the event of a crisis should you become unable to look after your loved one.

### **What To Organize**

The following are various types of information regarding your relative to which it's important to have easy access.

**Vital statistics:** Date and place of birth, immigration and citizenship papers, military service records, employment history and marriage and divorce records. Keep birth certificates and other identification together in a safe place.

**Medical information:** Height, weight, blood type, allergies, immunizations, family health history and personal health history - including tests, diagnoses, treatments and results, hospitalizations and surgeries. Keep a log of doctors and other health care professionals seen and recommendations made - for example, lifestyle changes, medication or referral to a specialist. Maintain a listing, too, of home care providers and

other healthcare organizations and services involved with your relative.

This is also the place to include medication information sheets from your loved one's pharmacy; punch holes in them or store them in top-loading page protectors if you decide to use a binder. Do the same with disease-related information in the form of brochures and other literature.

**Financial information:** Bank accounts, safety deposit boxes, investments, assets, income, debts, credit cards, insurance policies, income tax records and funeral prearrangements. Include contact information for banks, financial planner, insurance broker and accountant. Also include household bills if your relative lives on his or her own and you are assisting with their management.

**Legal documents:** Information pertaining to powers of attorney, advance directives and estate planning falls into this category. Include contact information for lawyers and any other legal professionals that have been consulted.

**Personal information:** Contact information for relatives and friends is key here. Be sure to obtain work and cell phone numbers in case you need to reach them right away. Some other contacts to include: neighbours (especially if your loved one lives alone) church and clubs and groups to which your loved one belongs. This is also a good place to record your relative's wishes around funeral arrangements if there are no prearrangements in place.

**Other information:** Anything else that doesn't fit into the above categories, including your loved one's daily routines and weekly schedule, and miscellaneous community resources he or she accesses (specialized transportation, for example).

It's a good idea to create a listing of various types of emergency contacts - both family and professional - to post by the phone. Store it in a plastic sleeve or have it laminated to ensure it stays in good condition. Make a copy to keep with you. Likewise, carry a current list of your relative's medications (name and dosage) in your wallet or purse so you'll always have this vital information handy during medical appoint-

ments and in case of an emergency.

### **How To Organize Information**

One option for organizing information is a portable file box containing hanging file folders with plastic tabs and manila file folders. Another idea is a three-ring binder equipped with dividers, lined paper and transparent sheet protectors (a three-hole punch is also helpful). Label hanging folders or dividers according to major types of information - medical, financial and so on. You may wish to subdivide each of these categories, using separate sections or folders for medications, medical visits and hospitalizations in the medical category, for example.

Charts are the best way to organize information such as medication use. Most pharmacies have a medication log available for customers, which saves you from

having to create your own.

To centralize vital statistics and financial and legal information, consider utilizing one of the estate planning booklets distributed through funeral homes and financial planning firms.

The final phase after collecting and organizing information is maintaining it so that it remains up-to-date. Set aside a monthly time to review information, and make a habit of updating records immediately after medical visits and hospitalizations.

Another caregiver must-have is a large-grid wall calendar with plenty of space for keeping track of appointments, events and other important dates, such as application deadlines and due dates for bills. These can be found at office supply stores.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Lisa M. Petsche is a social worker and a freelance writer specializing in elder care.*

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# Poets' Corner

Editor's Note: If you have written a "well-worked" poem which you would like considered for publication, please email it to seniornewsga@cox.net or mail it to Senior News, 214 Wilsons Creek Bend, Bonaire, GA 31005. Please include your name and address on your poem. We will publish selected poems (or excerpts) as space permits.

\*\*\*\*\*

## NEVER BE BLUE

by Joy L. Albright

As we live our lives  
to others be true  
Building good memories  
that will take us through  
Doing good deeds today  
will bring joy our way  
So when things go wrong  
our lives are in disarray  
We can go back in time  
pick up our memories  
And be on our way!

\*\*\*\*\*

## I'M TIRED – I'LL SIT AWHILE

by Dot A. Jones

I cleaned the baths, washed loads  
of clothes and now,  
I'm tired, I'll sit for awhile.

Resting some always helps a bit,  
so now I can vacuum with  
a hit and a miss, until my back  
gives me a fit.

Dusting is the next chore. I'll do  
my best. I have been told there  
are three ways to dust: move  
everything, dust around or pull  
the shades. The latter is a must.  
I'll just sit for awhile. I'm tired.

I remember the days when I worked  
with a vengeance. It was fun to  
clean for most of the day. I really  
looked forward to it, I could say.

But, Father Time slipped into my  
home. He changed my lifestyle,  
the years took their toll and before  
I knew it I was old.

So, when you are young enjoy  
your work, the day will come  
when you need to shirk.

Just remember, you can always  
say in "old age," I'm tired and  
sit awhile; and, maybe others will  
help you with a hug and smile.

They will know you always did  
for them and they will give you  
a hand and say: "You have earned

the right to say, I'm tired; and,  
you can just sit for awhile."

\*\*\*\*\*

## THE RISEN SAVIOUR

by Shirley Glisson

There was no beauty there that day  
As Jesus' blood was shed  
And fell beneath the rugged cross,  
Our Lord and Saviour was dead.

They laid Him in a borrowed tomb.  
Put a seal upon the door  
So those who followed after Him  
Could see His face no more.

Alas! What is that springing up  
Where Jesus' blood did fall?  
Love, so great and so abundant,  
It, our sins, will cover all.

Still there's more, look at the tomb,  
He's no longer bound within.  
He gave His life for all mankind,  
And now He lives again.

The Seed was bruised but not  
destroyed.  
New life He gives to all  
Who'll trust and yield their  
lives to Him  
When upon His name they call.

# Opinion

# Policy... Strategy... Leadership

by DANIEL W. GATLYN, USN Ret.  
Minister/Journalist

What I am about to put forth will be quickly shuffled to "back burner" (if retained at all); but, somebody needs to hear these words... subjects that many are afraid to utter! Most recipients are still in their prime. I am not! If I am going to be heard, it means "spitting it out now!," for the grim reaper is not far away.

On April 6 our nation experienced the milestone of our President launching (unannounced) strikes on Syria. General commendations have been arriving but many with questions as to what policy and strategy is "on the slate;" and, with elaboration as to his responsibility to legislative bodies. Well, whoopee!

First of all (and I have been around the block a few times in military, moral and leadership dimensions) let me remind every reader/listener, that strategy and process changes with each rising of the sun! We face a new world every day! What worked yester-

day may not work at all today! And seldom is effective when "Bubba, and all his cousins, have been informed!" Sorry! That's just the way it is!

Next (and I am very much aware that we have three branches of government – Legislative, Judicial and Executive), tons of Policy has been penned over two hundred years with a mad and continuous scramble as to who will "take precedence over what." It never ends! But why not?

May I shed a moment's light on what is happening? The various sectors write painstaking policies and then we proceed to violate the same! We choose a Commander in Chief; a Congress; a Senate; an AG; CIA; Secretary of State; various Ambassadors; Generals; Admirals... and more – each with specific job descriptions – and then we "jump ship" and try to tell each other how to function! Makes no sense!

Volumes have been promulgated on Leadership – the main theme being "Choose your most qualified person(s) and then LET THEM DO THEIR JOB!" Check it out! Most of the world's error is caused by unauthorized people

meddling in another's corner! If it is not your responsibility, THEN GO HOME! (Note: Trumps Team appears to be operating sensibly in spite of being hammered by a host of pundits.)

I have been in leadership for a half century (and more) from the local setting to an international scope. Much of what I have learned did not come from "the academy;" but rather, from trial and error. My greatest lesson has been to "remain in portfolio." I do not know all things! Nor can I fix everybody or everything! ( I do not try, though I often jest about fixing the world.)

I lean heavily on my fellow workers! I will endeavor to do my job! And I will trust others to do the same. And I will close the day with both good and bad, trusting tomorrow will be more profitable! That way, my sleep is unhampered. The sandbox and soap box are not good platforms for Leadership. America fares better when the Congress does the WRITING, the Commander in Chief the SIGHTING and the Military, the FIGHTING! The waters are navigable when "our ducks are in a row!"

# AGENCY ALERT: Were you born in 1952?

## “A Complete Guide to Enrolling in Medicare.”

by **KATHLEEN ERNCE**  
Executive Director, The Senior  
Citizens Council Augusta, Georgia  
kernce@seniorcitizenscouncil.org

**A**re you also turning 65 this year? Here is a comprehensive guide.

When and how should I apply to Medicare? You sign up for Medicare for the first time during your Initial Enrollment Period. The Initial Enrollment Period is the seven months surrounding your birth month (the three months before your birth month, your birth month, and the three months after your birth month). For example, if you were born in February 1952, you are eligible to enroll starting November 2016 (because November is three months before February) and can still enroll through the end of May 2017 (the three months after February).

If you are already receiving Social Security benefits at age 65, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare and should be receiving a Medicare card in the mail approximately three months before you turn 65. If the card has not arrived 30 days prior to your birth month, call

the Social Security Administration. If you are not already receiving Social Security benefits, you will need to enroll.

To sign up, you can go to [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov) and apply online. If the information that you give matches the records that Medicare has, there is no reason to have to produce a birth certificate or other forms of documentation. If you were born outside the US or there are discrepancies in the records, you may have to apply over the phone or in person and provide said documentation.

Which parts of Medicare should I sign up for? If you are still working at age 65 (or your spouse is still working), you may want to delay enrolling in some of the parts of Medicare until retirement, because Medicare is not free, and you might save some money by using just your employer insurance for the time being. Then when you retire, you can use your Special Enrollment Period to enroll into Medicare. However, you should consult your HR department or a Medicare expert before you decide to delay enrollment.

If you are not working and/or do not have any form of health insurance at age 65, you should definitely enroll in Medicare. You have two main options to choose from:

Original Medicare (with Part D and Medigap potentially added on) and Medicare Advantage.

Option one is Original Medicare

(i.e. Medicare Part A plus Medicare Part B).

Medicare covers basics like hospital services (Part A) and doctor's visits (Part B). It is called Original Medicare because it was the first type of Medicare program created by the federal government in 1965. You can add an optional Part D plan to your Original Medicare to get your prescription drugs covered, and you can also add a Medigap plan (aka supplemental coverage) to cover the cost gaps in Original Medicare.

If you choose Original Medicare, it is strongly recommended that you add both Part D (to get prescription drug coverage) and Medigap (to help pay the costs of Original Medicare). Without these two additions, it can be very difficult to afford prescriptions and other medical expenses.

Option two is the Medicare Advantage (MA) plan. MA is a privately-managed alternative to Original Medicare (which is run by the federal government). An MA plan covers all of the services of Original Medicare, and usually includes Part D (drug coverage) as

well. An MA plan may even offer additional services that Original Medicare does not cover—such as dental, hearing or vision coverage.

Where can I find trustworthy, expert advice? It is important to look before you leap when choosing your Medicare plan. Take time to read and discuss these options with a certified Medicare benefits adviser. The Executive Director of The Senior Citizens Council is a Certified Medicare counselor and is able to answer questions regarding Medicare and provides guidance individuals into the most appropriate option for each situation. There is no cost for this service; however, an appointment is required. Please call us at 706-868-0120 to obtain an appointment.

Once you've picked your plan and successfully enrolled, it's time to celebrate! Plan a big party for yourself and anyone else you know who is new to the world of Medicare beneficiaries. You've earned it (literally)!

Sources: Medicare and You 2017 Medicare Handbook; “65 and Still Working? A Guide to Medicare.”

## CSRA Coalition of Advocates for the Aging Membership Drive

Submitted by  
**JEANETTE CUMMINGS**  
Director, Area Agency on Aging  
A Division of the CSRA Regional  
Development Center

**T**he CSRA Coalition of Advocates for the Aging invites you to join them in sharing ideas for solutions and celebrating efforts in making a difference in the quality of life for older adults. The goal is to help older adults age well and live strong. The Coalition's purpose is to provide an opportunity for interested individuals to promote healthy aging – retirees, students, faith organizations, citizens, providers, professionals, civic groups and community leaders are

encouraged to join. The Coalition members provide and promote community education, networking opportunities and collective advocacy efforts.

**TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP**

- Partnership (includes benefits for three): \$100.00
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Checks should be made payable to the CSRA Coalition of Advocates for the Aging and mailed (with the above requested information) to: Post Office Box 14082, Augusta, GA 30909.

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**Gertrude Herbert Institute of Art**  
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Call 706-722-5495 for information.  
\*\*\*\*\*

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Are you caring for a spouse or parent? Join  
other caregivers to share experiences, gath-  
er practical resources and find the support  
you need. The group meets the 3rd  
Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at the  
Friedman Branch Library located at 1447  
continued on page 7

General Business Directory For Seniors

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a part of your family activities.


CALL: Mid GA: 478-475-9995  
OR CSRA: 706-650-5760

To find a location near you, visit  
www.goodwillworks.org

## EVENTS from page 6

Jackson Road in Augusta. For more information contact Georgia Jopling, Caregiver Specialist, Area Agency on Aging, 706-210-2000 or 888-922-4464.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Augusta Museum of History

560 Reynolds Street in downtown Augusta. Call 706-722-8454 for events information.

- Voices of the Past Museum Theater: *A Petersburg Boat Pilot*: Sat., May 20
- Voices of the Past Museum Theater: *The Other Tubmans*: Sat., May 13
- Brown Bag Series: Bill Kirby, Augusta Chronicle: May 10
- Music Party: *Celebrating Mr. James Brown*: May 29

\*\*\*\*\*

### Lucy Craft Laney

#### Museum of Black History

www.lucycraftlaneymuseum.com  
Call 706-724-3576 for events information.

\*\*\*\*\*

### USA DANCE Augusta Chapter 6074 Every Third Saturday of the Month

The USA Dance is a National Dance Organization. Our Chapter 6074 focuses on the Augusta and Aiken areas. Our dances are held on the THIRD SATURDAY of each month. The dance is held at American Legion Post 63, 90 Milledge Rd., Augusta, from 7:30 to 11 p.m. Lessons at 8 p.m. If you are able, please bring something sweet or savory for the goody table. Tasty food, the best dance floor in the CSRA, great music, a friendly and welcoming atmosphere all add up to a perfect Saturday evening experience. Cost is \$8.00 for USA Dance members or \$10.00 for non-members. For additional information call Kay Cooke at 706-210-8780 or Rudy Brostrom at 803-442-9337. Join us for an evening of fun and fellowship!

\*\*\*\*\*

Augusta Christian Singles Dance

Dances are at 7:30 p.m. with complimentary dance lessons at 6:30 p.m. Admission will be \$10.00 for guests and \$8.00 for members. Light refreshments will be served.

Located at The Ballroom Dance Center, 525 Grand Slam Drive, Evans, GA 30809.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Friday Night Dance

Every Friday, 8-11 p.m., American Legion Post 63, 90 Milledge Rd., Augusta. With band or DJ. \$10 cost. Free coffee and cake. Everyone welcome. Call 706-733-5184.

\*\*\*\*\*

### DBSA (Depression Bi-Polar Support Alliance)

Meets the 3rd Tues. of every month at 6:30 p.m., First Baptist Church of Augusta, Walton Bldg., Room 105., 3500 Walton Way Ext., Augusta. Call 706-722-0010 for complete details or the Friendship Center (see Augusta phone book for number).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Pieceful Hearts Quilt Guild

Meets on Monday nights, 7-9 p.m., and Thursday mornings, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Martintown Rd., North Augusta. For details call 803-279-6456 or 706-790-4975.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Augusta Chapter Of The Embroiderers' Guild Of America

Meets First Mon. each Month, 6:30 p.m., St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 3321 Wheeler Rd., Augusta. Additional information - Call Diana Parfit at, 706-

513-5458 or email: dianalparfitt@gmail.com.

\*\*\*\*\*

### CSRA Parkinson Support Group

Meets monthly, St. John Towers Dining Room, 724 Greene St., Augusta. For details call 706-364-1662.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Area Agency on Aging

30-minute aging services information session, 3rd Thursday each month, 1 p.m. KROC Center Augusta, Senior Lounge, 1833 Broad Street. Registration not required. Contact April Young, Resource Specialist, 706-210-2022 or 706-210-2018.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Harmony River Chorus of Sweet Adelines International

Local chapter includes the Augusta, North Augusta and Aiken area of women ages 18 to 80 who love singing Barbershop style music. Open rehearsals are every Thurs., 7-9 p.m., at the North Augusta Church, 600 W. Martintown Rd., North Augusta, SC. For additional information con-

tact Judy Tobin at 706-877-2715 (GA) or Connie Waiswils at 803-522-0552 (SC) or visit website: harmonyriverchorus.org.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Turkey Creek Festival

Sat., May 6, 10:30 a.m. Parade 10 a.m. I-75, exit 122, Highway 230, Byromville.

\*\*\*\*\*

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## ~ ADVERTISING INFORMATION ~

**Anthony Sorrells**  
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**Carolyn Brenneman**  
706-407-1564 • seniornewsga@att.net

**Billy Tucker**  
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# General Business Directory For Seniors

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On the Cover

Take a trip to Congaree National Park!

by CAROLYN BRENNEMAN

Now is the best time of year to explore the beauty of the famous Congaree National Park just right over the border in South Carolina. Less than 150 miles away, the trip to this fabulous park is a delightful experience. Now that the weather has warmed up, this is the time of year to enjoy the flowing waters in the river and hike or walk the well-established paths throughout the national park. Many hikers, walkers, nature lovers, and photographers will be traveling to this beautiful area and enjoying the warm days and cooler evenings exploring all that the national park has to offer. So let's all plan a trip with our family, grandkids, and friends.

One of the great features of Congaree National Park is the abundant hiking trails all around the forest. The Bluff Trail, the Sims Trail and the Boardwalk can be traveled by the beginner hiker as well as the experienced hiker. So, let's all try it out! The Boardwalk starts from the Visitor's

Center and goes through diverse old growth forest. You can listen for woodpeckers hammering away in the tall trees above. The lower part of the boardwalk passes through a primeval bald cypress and water tupelo forest. You will see hundreds of Cypress knees protrude from the forest floor. The knees, part of the tree's root system, are thought to help aerate the roots and anchor the cypress in the area's wet soil. Congaree is noted for being one of the tallest temperate, hardwood forests in the world with loblolly pines as tall as 17 story buildings, tall sweetgum trees, and beautiful cypress trees. To be in this forest, is like stepping back in time in a wilderness area. You will really enjoy the beauty of the park.

Another great feature of the park is the free ranger guided canoe trips throughout the year. No canoeing experience is necessary and all ages are welcome. The rangers provide instruction in paddling and give us an interpretation of the park and river as we paddle away in a group. While canoeing, we can see the diverse wildlife of the area and, depending on the season, we may see turtles, snakes, raccoons, white tailed deer, and owls. The canoe trips are by reservation only. You will canoe in a most exquisite part of the park detailed with vivid fall colors, large cypress trees, and Spanish moss. If you are interested in signing up for a trip, the dates for each month's Wilderness Canoe Tours can be found on the park's Calendar of Events. All reservations must be made online and tours are composed of no more than 12 individuals and last approximately 3 1/2 to 4 hours. The trips fill up very fast, and spaces are available until filled to capacity.

Wildlife and plant life photography opportunities are abundant.



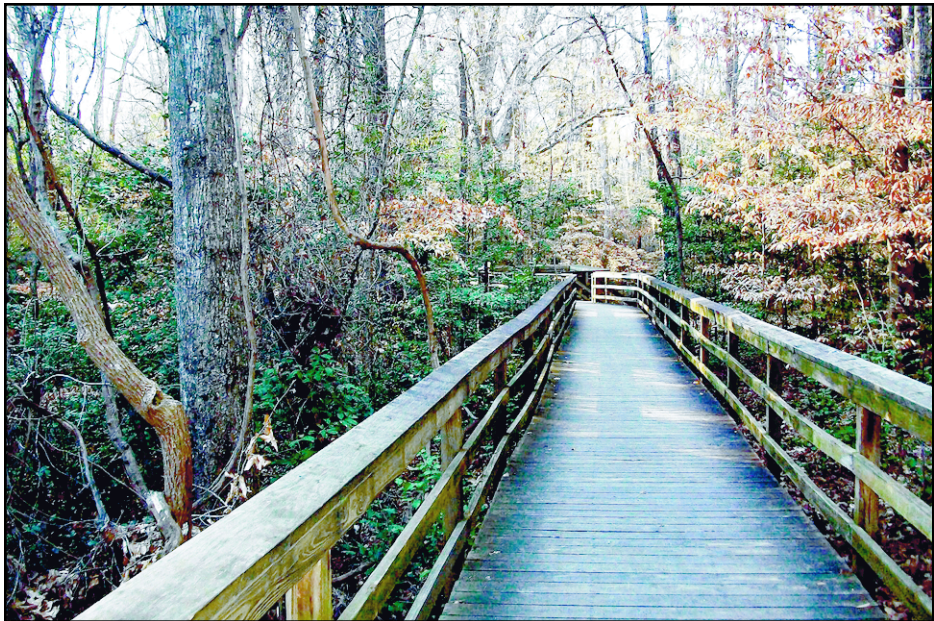
Canoers traveling on the river

The large trees with their massive canopies block out a considerable amount of sunlight, yet allow enough filtered light through to make for some interesting photos. So come to visit this great forest, take a walk or hike, sign up for a

canoe ride, and enjoy the beautiful surroundings that nature provides. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/cong](http://www.nps.gov/cong) or call 803.776.4396 for more information. Let's all take a trip and enjoy a fabulous outing!



The knees of the Cypress tree



The famous walking Boardwalk Trail

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