

Lt. Governor Pamela Evette leads SC7 hike along the Congaree River in S.C.

SC7 Expedition honors law enforcement agencies and leaders in the S.C. Midlands

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, USA, July 14, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 4th-annual SOUTH CAROLINA SEVEN (SC7) Expedition concluded its trek through the Upstate of South Carolina earlier this week and is now winding its way through central South Carolina: Participants having hiked a stretch of the Capital City (Columbia) Passage on Wednesday; the Cayce-West Columbia riverfront along the storied Congaree River, Thursday; and the Congaree National Park, Friday.

Thursday's Congaree River (Cayce-West Columbia riverfront) hike was led by S.C. Lieutenant Governor Pamela Evette, the SC7 team, the mayors of Cayce and West Columbia, Midlands-area law enforcement commanders, two county councilmen, and senior representatives from Duke Energy South Carolina.

Following the brisk riverfront walk in 95-plus degree temps, nearly 75 hikers and SC7 supporters gathered at Savage Craft Aleworks in West Columbia for a special recognition of statewide law enforcement leaders and agencies, and the law enforcement leaders who were present, participating, and directing their departments to support the event through traffic control and physical security.

"It's no secret why people are moving to the Palmetto State," said Lt. Gov. Evette. "If for no other reason – and there are many – we are a law and order state."



SC7 leader Michelle McCollum, pres. of the S.C. National Heritage Corridor; S.C. Lt. Gov. Pamela Evette; and SC7 leader Dr. Tom Mullikin, chair of the S.C. Floodwater Commission prior to Thursday's hike.

Michelle McCollum, president of the S.C. National Heritage Corridor, agrees.

“In fact, Clemson University recently conducted a study that indicated parks and green spaces – like those we are enjoying here in the Midlands and elsewhere along the expedition trail – reduce crime in some of our country's largest cities,” said McCollum, who also serves as SC7’s logistics officer. “So as we travel across the state bringing attention to the benefits of outdoor recreation, it's very fitting to take an opportunity to recognize our law enforcement and make that vital connection between conservation and community quality of life.”

Law enforcement leaders who participated in Thursday’s hike included Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott, Columbia Police Chief Skip Holbrook, Cayce Police Chief Chris Cowan, Kershaw County Sheriff Lee Boan, West Columbia Assistant Chief of Police Bruce Wade, and Captain Daniel Floyd, representing the Newberry County Sheriff’s Office. Each officer was presented a tree from SC7 officials.

Bruce Brutschy, past president and current co-chair of the West Columbia Police Foundation, received the SC7 Environmental Resiliency Leadership Award, for his facilitating work and overall participation in this and previous year’s expeditions.

“Today’s event is about building bridges within the broader S.C. community,” said Brutschy. “It’s about communicating and advancing relationships, which we are experiencing as an indirect, actually a direct, result of SC7.”

Why SC7? A joint venture between Global Eco Adventures (founded by Dr. Tom Mullikin, SC7 leader and chair of the S.C. Floodwater Commission) and McCollum's S.C. National Heritage Corridor (National Park Service), the month-long SC7 Expedition across South Carolina parallels



SC7 award recipient Bruce Brutschy, South Carolina Lt. Governor Pamela Evette, Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott, Kershaw County Sheriff Lee Boan, and Cayce Chief of Police Chris Cowan following Thursday’s SC7 hike.



Dr. Tom Mullikin (center) with representatives of Duke Energy South Carolina and their families.

much of the state's Palmetto Trail showcasing S.C.'s seven natural wonders and creating a greater awareness of S.C.'s sterling natural resources and how to protect them. Litter sweeps, river cleanups and other environmental cleanups, and trail repairs are taking place along the way.

The seven designated wonders of South Carolina include Sassafras Mountain; the Jocassee Gorges; the Chattooga River; the Congaree National Forest; the Edisto River; the Ashepoo, Combahee, and Edisto Basin (universally referred to as the ACE Basin); and Bull Island-Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge: "Each one a unique geographical treasure," according to Dr. Mullikin, an internationally acclaimed global expedition leader, attorney, university professor, former U.S. Army officer, and retired two-star commanding general of the S.C. State Guard.

"We are hiking to create awareness," said Mullikin. "We are also teaching to create a greater understanding, and we are embracing to unleash passions to protect our environment and build meaningful resiliency strategies."

During the post-hike gathering at Savage Craft, Duke Energy's state president Mike Callahan presented a check in the amount of \$50,000 to Palmetto Pride, the state's anti-litter organization for its currently running "Pick it, Post it" campaign.

Duke Energy is the presenting sponsor for this year's SC7 Expedition. Also partnering with SC7 is the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of South Carolina who are the named health and wellness sponsors for 2023. The S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism (SCPRT) is SC7's Ecotourism sponsor.

Next up for SC7 2023 is historic Camden and the Chotty Trail biathlon (kayaking and hiking) on and from the Wateree River through downtown Camden, Saturday, followed by Kayaking in Florence, Sunday. SC7 will then make its way to the Myrtle Beach coast and then the S.C. Lowcountry - with SCUBA dives, litter cleanups, and so much more along the way - concluding with a finish-line hike along the Spanish Moss Trail in Beaufort County, July 30.

- For more information about SC7, visit southcarolina7.com/.

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