

Beautify Carolina Forest's application approved by South Carolina Secretary of State

By [Michael Smith michael.smith@myhorrynews.com](mailto:michael.smith@myhorrynews.com) Updated Jan 14, 2016



Courtesy photo info@myhorrynews.com Beautify Carolina Forest volunteers pick up vast amounts of litter that accumulated in a drainage ditch near the Carolina Forest car wash on Renee Drive. Beautify Carolina Forest recently incorporated as a 501(c)(3) organization with the S.C. Secretary of State.

It's a record Richard Skrip never wanted to see broken. But at the same time, the 51 bags of trash Beautify Carolina Forest collected on Carolina Forest Boulevard between U.S. 501 and Postal Way over the weekend is a reflection of the newly formed organization's commitment to tackling litter.

"The sad thing is we couldn't even finish because there was so much trash," Skrip, president of the new organization said. "It's just amazing how much trash is alongside the roadways. It's somewhat hard to comprehend people can be so irresponsible."

Beautify Carolina Forest hopes to turn the tide.

Consisting of volunteers who've been picking up litter during the past 18 months, Beautify Carolina Forest has taken beautification to the next level.

On Dec. 31, the group official filed and received certification of its nonprofit articles of incorporation with the S.C. Secretary of State's Office, which gives Beautify Carolina Forest 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

The organization also learned it was one of Horry County groups and local governments receiving Palmetto Pride grants.

Beautify Carolina Forest was awarded \$2,500, which will be used to continue a median beautification project that began about a year ago.

The median project has an estimated total cost of \$25,000. Some components of it were completed in 2015 with the planting of sabal palms in the median of Carolina Forest Boulevard near Gateway Drive.

Future phases include planting more palms along River Oaks Drive near the Food Lion as well as flowerbeds.

"We do all of these things because we see there's a tremendous need in this community," Skrip said. "Just creating a more creative landscaping environment, too all of us, it's really important."

Other Palmetto Pride grant recipients include City of Myrtle Beach, \$4,985; Girl Scout Troop 955, \$2,500; and Horry County Planning and Zoning, \$4,000, according to a news release.

The town of Atlantic Beach also received a \$5,000 Palmetto Pride Enforcement Grant.

Grants provide law enforcement agencies with equipment to help enforce state and local litter laws, the release said.

In all, nearly \$19,000 in grants were awarded to Horry County organizations.

Palmetto Pride is a 501 (c)(3) organization that encourages citizens to take a more active role in preventing litter.

Grants go to organizations and local governments to help "create successful litter eradication programs and beautification projects in their communities," the release said.

Horry County spokeswoman Lisa Bourcier said the county originally applied for \$8,000.

She said the grant money would be spent providing and installing a storyboard or interpretive sign next to each of the five environmental sculptures either installed or waiting to be installed at Enterprise Landing, Chris Anderson Landing, the U.S. 17 and S.C. 22 landing, Johnny Causey Landing and Loris nature park.

The sculptures will explain how litter affects the wildlife and humans, Bouricer said.

Myrtle Beach's grant will be spent creating a community garden at The Market Common between now and December.

One of the requirements of the grant is to hold a one-day Great American Cleanup, where the focus will be on Warbird Park to U.S. 17 Bypass, said city spokesman Mark Kruea.

Litter cleanup will take place in the morning of April 16, Kruea said.

As for Beautify Carolina Forest, many of its volunteers got their start through beautification and litter cleanup efforts coordinated by the Carolina Forest Civic Association.

The Civic Association, however, is a 501(c)(4) non-profit, which Skrip said limits the amount of donations it can solicit.

Forming Beautify Carolina Forest as a 501(c)(3) organization will make it easier for private citizens to make tax-deductible donations that can be applied toward the median project and other beautification efforts, Skrip said.

"This allows us to seek out donations and generate some revenue so we can expand our beautification program," he said.

Officers of Beautify Carolina Forest, in addition to Skrip, the president, include: Betsy Fay, vice-president; Carol Franceski, secretary; and Dave Shetterly, treasurer. Other members include Dan Kniola, H. Leonard Richeson and Jory Taylor.