

Local & Regional

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OCONEE-PICKENS EDITION

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David Williams

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REGIONAL BRIEFS

ANDERSON

Bank robber pleads guilty in federal court

An Anderson man has pleaded guilty in federal court in Spartan-

OCONEE COUNTY

Oconee Alliance, Upstate Forever share

Goal is to promote quality of life and work

BY DAVID WILLIAMS
Oconee-Pickens Bureau

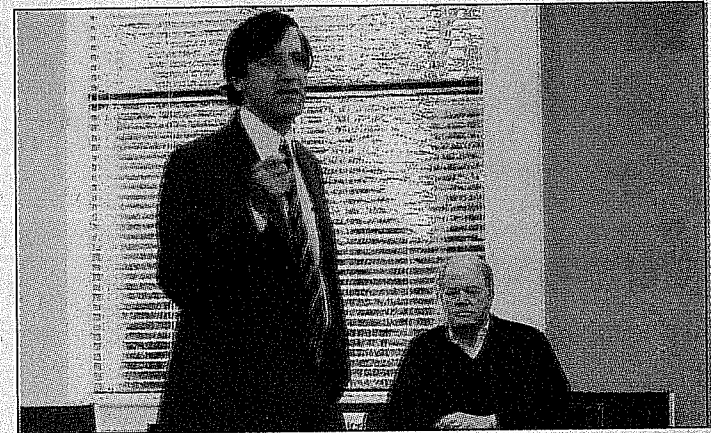
SENECA — One function of the newly formed Oconee Alliance is to provide another view of the Oconee County big picture that is Oconee County for industries and developers that visit the area.

While the county's Economic Development Commission promotes many of the county's assets and the advantages to locating in the Golden Corner, the Alliance can promote quality of life and work hand-in-hand with the commission, said Neal

Workman, president of the Alliance.

"Sometimes you will find rocks in the road," Mr. Workman said. "And every person with the Alliance can move those rocks."

Please see OCONEE, page 2B



DAVID WILLIAMS Anderson Independent-Mail
Brad Wyche, executive director of Upstate Forever, which promotes sensible growth and the protection of special places in the Upstate, speaks to the Oconee Alliance Thursday at the Thrift Development Building in Bountyland. Neal Workman, seated, is the president of the Oconee Alliance.

Oconee County's future addressed by two groups

FROM PAGE 1B

Protecting the quality of life in Oconee County is also part of the mission of Upstate Forever. The group's executive director, Brad Wyche, told more than 25 members of the Alliance Thursday that growth and development can work together with conservation efforts.

"Planning is not rocket science," Mr. Wyche said. "What do you want Oconee County to be like in 25 to 30 years?"

Mr. Wyche, who was educated at Princeton and Yale and is a graduate of the University of Virginia Law School, founded Upstate Forever in 1998.

Upstate Forever now has more than 1,500 members and a staff of 15 at offices in Greenville and Spartanburg. Mr. Wyche said he's proud that Upstate Forever has worked to protect nearly 5,000 acres through its Land Trust Program.

"We're consuming too much land," Mr. Wyche said. "Do we want to be another Atlanta in 30 years? That's very terrifying."

Mr. Wyche said about 200 acres a day is lost to development in South Carolina, including 33 acres in the six counties Upstate Forever serves. He said three acres a day is lost in Oconee County.

"We're going to grow," Mr. Wyche said. "People are going to come into our area and we can control growth or it will control us."

Mr. Workman said surrounding counties are ahead of Oconee in putting their Alliance organizations to work.

"We hope to soon start the search for a full-time executive director and we already have office space in the Economic Development Commission building," Mr. Workman said.

For more information on the Oconee Alliance call the commission at (864) 638-4210

or e-mail the commission's administrative assistant, Thelma Miller, at tmiller@oconeesc.com. For more information on Upstate Forever, visit www.upstateforever.org or call (864) 250-0500 or (864) 327-0090.

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