



Charleston County News Release

Release Number: 2818

Date: August 9, 2007

SPECIAL MEDIA INVITATION: *Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony - New County EMS Station Medic 2 and Summary Court! Building to be named after Margie Cannon. The public is invited for a tour so please promote in advance — great photo opportunity!*

What: Charleston County is excited about the **Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** for a new EMS and court building in North Charleston that will better serve the public! The building will jointly house EMS Medic 2 and Summary Court (North Charleston Magistrate Court 2). The opening ceremony will include comments from local government officials.

The new building will be named after the late Margie Elizabeth Fuller Cannon, the mother of Sheriff Al Cannon. Margie Cannon was one of the first female judges in the state and the county's first female magistrate. She died on Thursday, August 9 at age 85. Charleston County Council voted on Tuesday to dedicate the new building in her honor. Margie Cannon retired in 1994.

We would appreciate advance coverage of the event so the public may participate and tour the facility, and would also like to invite you to attend the grand opening. *Interviews with EMS and Summary Court personnel will be available at the ceremony.*

When: **Friday, Aug. 17 at 1 p.m.**

Where: **2145 Melbourne Street, North Charleston, SC, 29406**
Charleston County Medic 2 and Summary Court, Judge Stephanie Ganaway
(North Charleston Magistrate Court 2)

Who: Hosted by: Charleston County EMS (Director Don Lundy) and Summary Courts (Judge Stephanie Ganaway)
Speakers/VIP's: County Council member Teddie Pryor, Mayor Keith Summey of North Charleston, Sen. Glenn McConnell, Judge Stephanie Ganaway, EMS Director Don Lundy, County Administrator Mack Canterbury

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See building: <http://www.charlestoncounty.org/newsimages/newbuilding.htm>

Background: Previously, EMS Medic 2 was located in a rented building that was not built or designed as an EMS station. The ambulance had to remain parked outside and less accessible to the first responders. The new location will give EMS better access and allow equipment and personnel a safer place to work. The previous location was the old North Charleston Water District office at 1832 Helm Avenue.

The new building is approximately 7,332 square feet including the bays for vehicles, and is the first all-brick court house built in 15 years. "The brick design is unique, and the building will better serve the public," Judge Ganaway said. "We now have awnings to secure the public from the weather, and people will have more privacy in filling out documents in the large lobby. The court also has a night deposit box for people who chose to make a payment after hours."

Magistrate Court Functions

Adjudicate criminal and civil cases

Magistrate Courts handle a variety of issues, including restraining orders, traffic violations and criminal cases with punishments of a fine not exceeding \$500 plus assessments or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days or both. These courts also handle landlord-tenant problems as well as claim and delivery civil actions and issuance of arrest and search warrants.

Magistrates are appointed by the Charleston County Senate Delegation. They serve four-year terms.

The Summary Courts Administration provides administrative support to the Centralized Preliminary and Bond Hearing Courts as well as 11 area Magistrate Courts and two Small Claims Courts.

Interesting Facts

- Since 1991, this department has received achievement awards from the National Association of Counties for its Magistrate Court Automation Program and for the Magistrates' Oversight Committee
- Charleston County was the first county in South Carolina to computerize its Magistrate Courts and link with state government computers.
- Laws require each Magistrate Court to keep a docket for criminal and civil cases and report all fines imposed. These duties are now performed by Summary Courts Administration.
- Traffic and criminal cases heard by Magistrate Courts are limited to fines of up to \$500 or imprisonment of up to 30 days or both.
- The most common cases tried by Magistrate Criminal Courts include prostitution, assault and battery, violation of check laws, harassment, stalking, criminal domestic violence, receiving stolen goods and obtaining goods under false pretenses.