

# 'Just public safety'



## McCalls donate life vests to Fall Creek Landing

BY NORM CANNADA  
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SALEM — On the day after the body of a Greenville County man was recovered from Lake Keowee at Fall Creek Landing, Oconee County councilman Wayne McCall and his brother, Keller, were on site armed with safety vests and rope.

The brothers, who have owned a commercial diving business together for more than four decades, strung the rope between two trees near where people go into the lake, and hung 20 bright orange vests on the rope. Wayne McCall, who has chaired the council's Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Committee for more than a decade, said a committee meeting wasn't his answer to Thomas

Landon Gallman's death on Tuesday — the 19th death there in 26 years. He wanted to do something.

"The bottom line is you can have all the meetings in the world, but somebody has to take it upon themselves and say, 'OK, I'm just going to do something,'" McCall said as he and his brother hung the last of the life vests they had purchased earlier in the day. "Now it's done. Maybe that guy would be alive if we had been here one day earlier."

The brothers said they spent about \$150 on the life vests and then painted "Fall Creek" on each of the vests while they were in their shop.

Keller McCall said he had read about the drowning death in The Journal when his brother called

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around 6 a.m. Wednesday.

"Wayne called and said we needed to do something," he said. "We're going to put life vests out there. If they get gone, they get gone. If not, they might spur somebody else to take some action to do something about this.

"You've got to start somewhere, so therefore you've got the life vest

here before you cross (the lake)," he added. "If they don't bring them back, so what? It might save a life. If you put enough out there, it's more inviting. Somebody may come up and grab one."

Wayne McCall, who stressed the brothers' action was from their business and not in his role as a councilman, called Tuesday's drowning "another senseless death" at Fall Creek.

"It's easy to walk across there," he said. "It's got a little land bridge, but if you step off and you can't swim, you're going to drown. This is just public safety, maybe helping somebody out."

With more people expected to come to the lake for Independence Day, he said he didn't believe a committee meeting was necessary. He said his brother notified county administrator Amanda

Brock of their plans by text message.

"People say, 'You've got to have a meeting, you've got to have a meeting,'" Wayne McCall said. "Me and Keller just decided we were going to do something about it. We don't have to have a meeting."

Keller quipped, "We had a meeting in our shop this morning."

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