

## Civitan Charities of Greenville; a Brief History

**1922:** The first Civitan Club in South Carolina was in Greenville, chartered early in 1922.

The Greenville club sponsored all the other early clubs in the state, including the Columbia Civitan Club.

**1933:** Greenville surrendered its charter in due to the great depression.

**1947:** Civitan returned to Greenville, sponsored by the Columbia Civitan Club, and chartered on April 28, 1947.

The Civitan Camp was originally built and used by the Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.), a depression era government program. The C.C.C camp was acquired by a group of local citizens, who incorporated as Charities, Inc. The Camp was for use by the Salvation Army as a camp for underprivileged children.

Greenville Civitan paid the fees for many children to attend the camp and later began to underwrite the cost of the camp operations for the summer.

**1955:** Greenville Civitan obtained a 40-year lease on the property, renamed it “The Civitan Fresh Air Camp” and began an extensive program of construction and improvement.

**1958:** Civitan Charities, Inc., a separate eleemosynary corporation, applied for tax exemption and received confirmation of its 501 (c) (3) designation by the U.S. Treasury on August 8, 1958.

The Club assigned its camp lease to the corporation. Civitan Charities later negotiated for and received the title to the land on which the camp stood.

**1970:** Charities, Inc. (as grantor) deeded the 175 acres site and its buildings to Civitan Charities of Greenville, Inc. as Grantee and Trustee with the stipulation:

“The Grantee shall own, hold, control, manage, operate or cause to be operated on the premises a camp or camps for the less fortunate or underprivileged of Greenville County, and or surrounding areas, whether such less fortunateness or underprivilegedness shall be economical, mental, or physical, or combinations thereof, and or to otherwise use, in any manner whatsoever, the property for the benefit of such less fortunate or underprivileged.”

*This is the Trustee Under Deeds dated May 26, 1970. Also, the Trust’s exemption ( 501-(c) (4) status is effective as of May 26, 1970.*

**1991:** Civitan Charities made the property and buildings available to the Greenville Association for the Retarded. The predecessor of Greenville County Disabilities and Special Needs Board (now Thrive Upstate) for a residential summer camp for the mentally disabled. The association’s camp called “Camp Spearhead” moved to the Civitan Camp.

It became increasingly difficult for volunteers to maintain the camp and came under public scrutiny.

**2006:** The site was sold to Naturaland Trust, a non-profit land trust established by Tommy Wyche, a renowned environmentalist. Greenville Civitan and Naturaland Trust hoped to shield the property from development. It is now a conservation area. The purchase price was \$1,750,000.

The monies from the sale allowed Civitan Charities to fund projects and grants. A trust of \$1,500,000 was established to give grants to deserving 501(c) (3) organization. The principal of

**2007:** Civitan Charities of Greenville, SC, Inc. and the Civitan International Foundation entered into a Restricted Fund Agreement. The Agreement is dated September 17, 2007. The Foundations was terminated circa 2018-2019.

The original deed specified that if the property was ever sold, the income was required to be used to help charities. A trust of \$1,500,00 was established to give grants to deserving 501 (c) (3) organizations. The Trust is invested and managed to always preserve the principle. Civitan International was designated to oversee the earnings of the trust, largely due to their experience and staff.

#### **Other Information**

- A three-year earnings average determines how much is available for grant disbursements and maintaining the original principle. Grant application information and forms are available on our GreenvilleCivitan.org web site.
- Applications for grants are reviewed and evaluated by International (and or Greenville Charities) to determine that all criteria are met. If all criteria are met, our Charities Board is notified and votes on the application. If the request is approved by the Board, the vote is put before the Membership.
- Grant applications with a postmark of January 31 or before are reviewed. Announcements and distributions occur in May.
- International receives 1% of the earnings each year for their management of the earnings.
- Civitan Charities receives 1% of the fiscal year-end balance of the fund. Charities retains 75% of the fund and distributes 25% to the Club.
- The 75% retained by Charities is used to fund our Projects, i.e., Clergy Appreciation, Citizenship Banquet, etc. and other Charities expenses.
- The 25% distributed to the Club provides support for administrative expenses that dues do not cover.