The South Carolina Silent Witness Story

Report on Victims of Homicide by Domestic Violence from 2016

Shannon Palm
October 3, 2017

This year's ceremony will mark the twentieth anniversary of Silent Witness.

In 2016, there were a total of 39 people murdered by a household member, according to the South Carolina[12] definition. Of those 39 people, 34 were women, constituting 87 percent of the total, and five were men, constituting 13 percent of the total.

The demographics of the victims were as follows: 51 percent were White, 46 percent were African American and three percent were Hispanic/ Latino. The average age of these victims was 42 years old.

The Office of the Attorney General, through its VAWA program, collected the data by contacting every sheriff's office, coroner's office, police department and solicitor's office in the state. Those offices were provided with a victim information sheet to complete and asked to provide any incident reports related to domestic homicide victims. As always, these offices were gracious and provided this Office with an abundance of information. In addition, all information was cross-checked for accuracy with the records of the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.

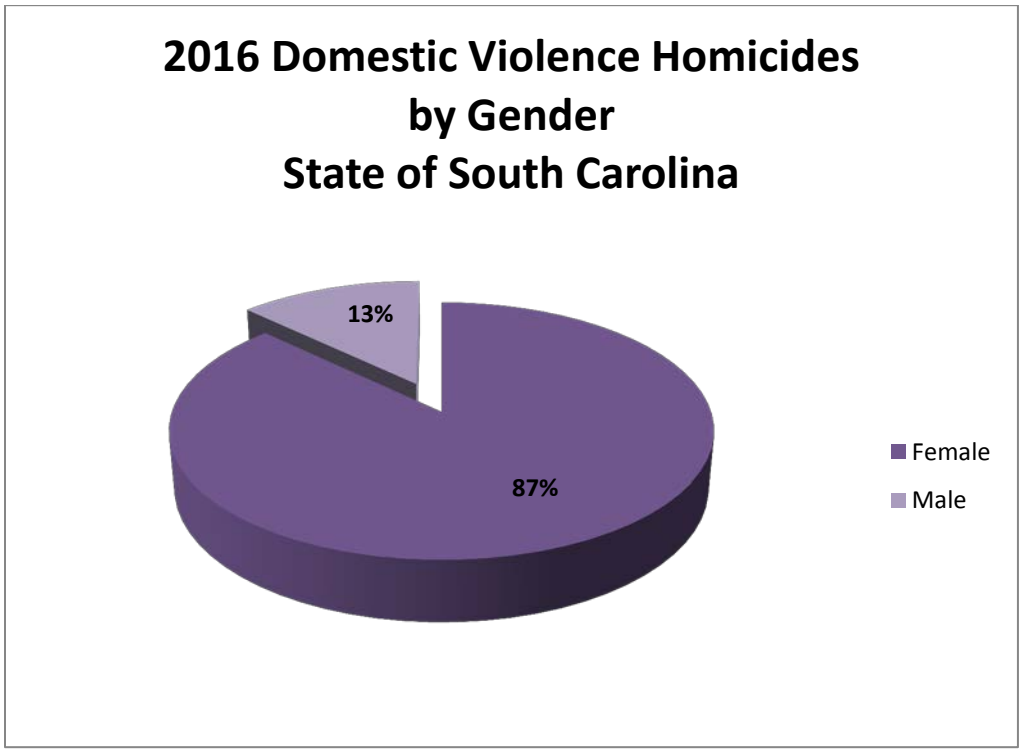
Twenty-two counties reported one or more domestic homicides for 2016.

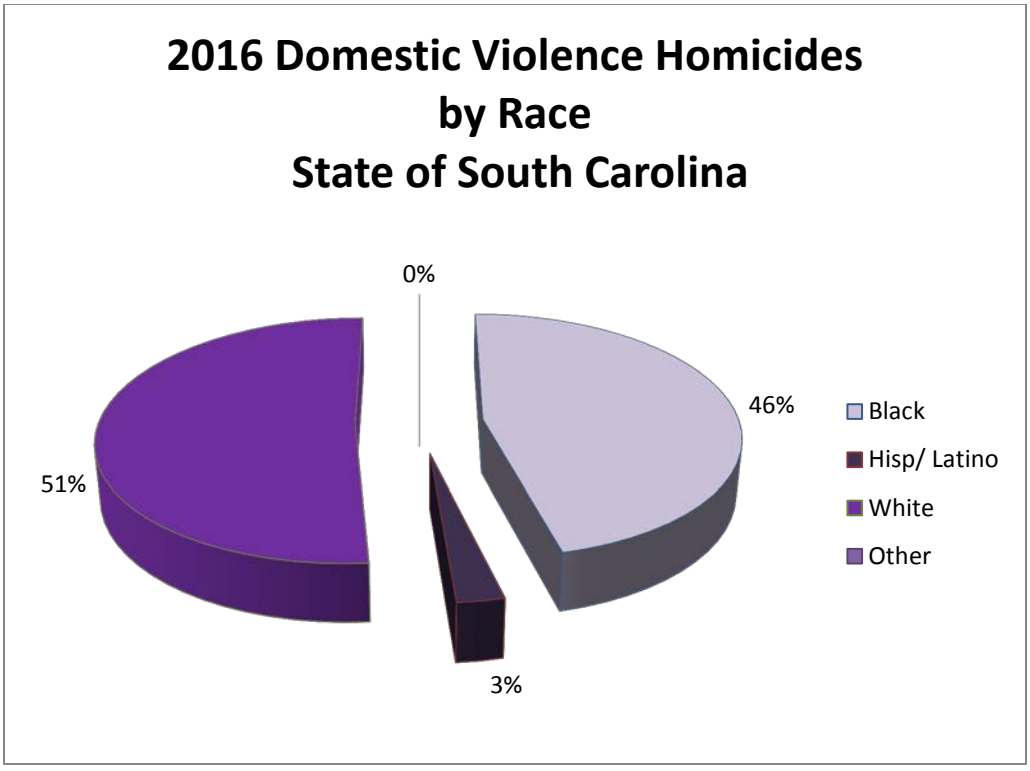
Guns were the primary weapon used in these homicides. In 69 percent of the cases, a gunshot wound was listed as the primary cause of death. Knives were used in 15 percent of the cases; eight percent were from strangulation, five percent from striking by or against a fist or object and three percent from other causes. Trial is pending for murder in 23 cases, 12 suspects died by suicide, one defendant pled guilty, one defendant was found guilty in a jury trial and two defendants are categorized as other: one suspect fled the state and one was found incompetent to stand trial.

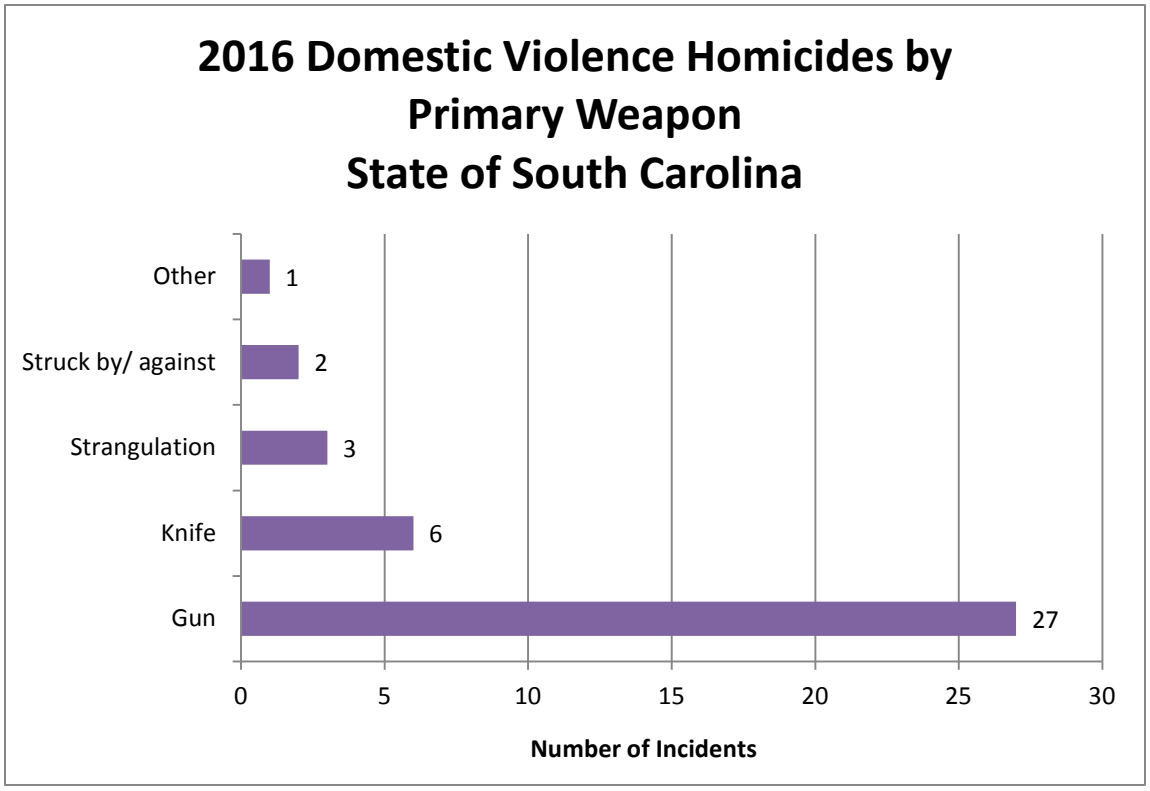
Following this summary are county-by-county statistics and statewide graphs depicting the statistics mentioned in this report.

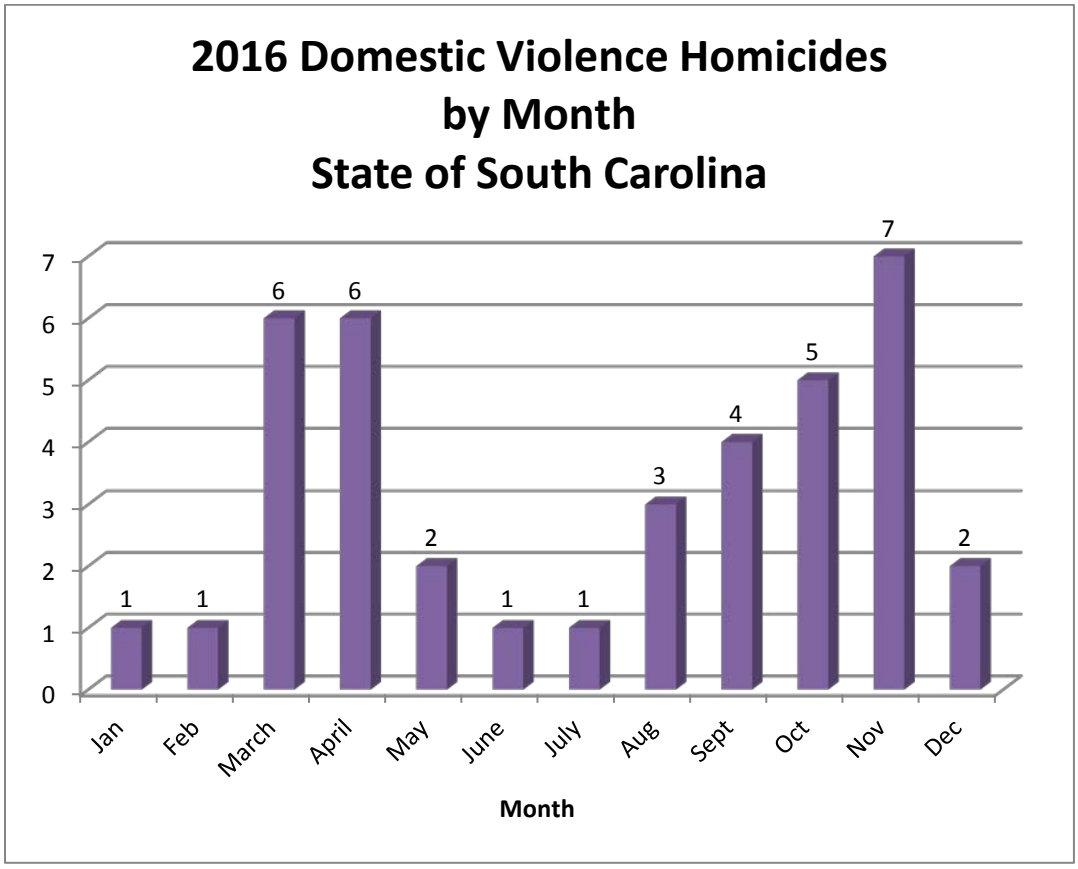
---

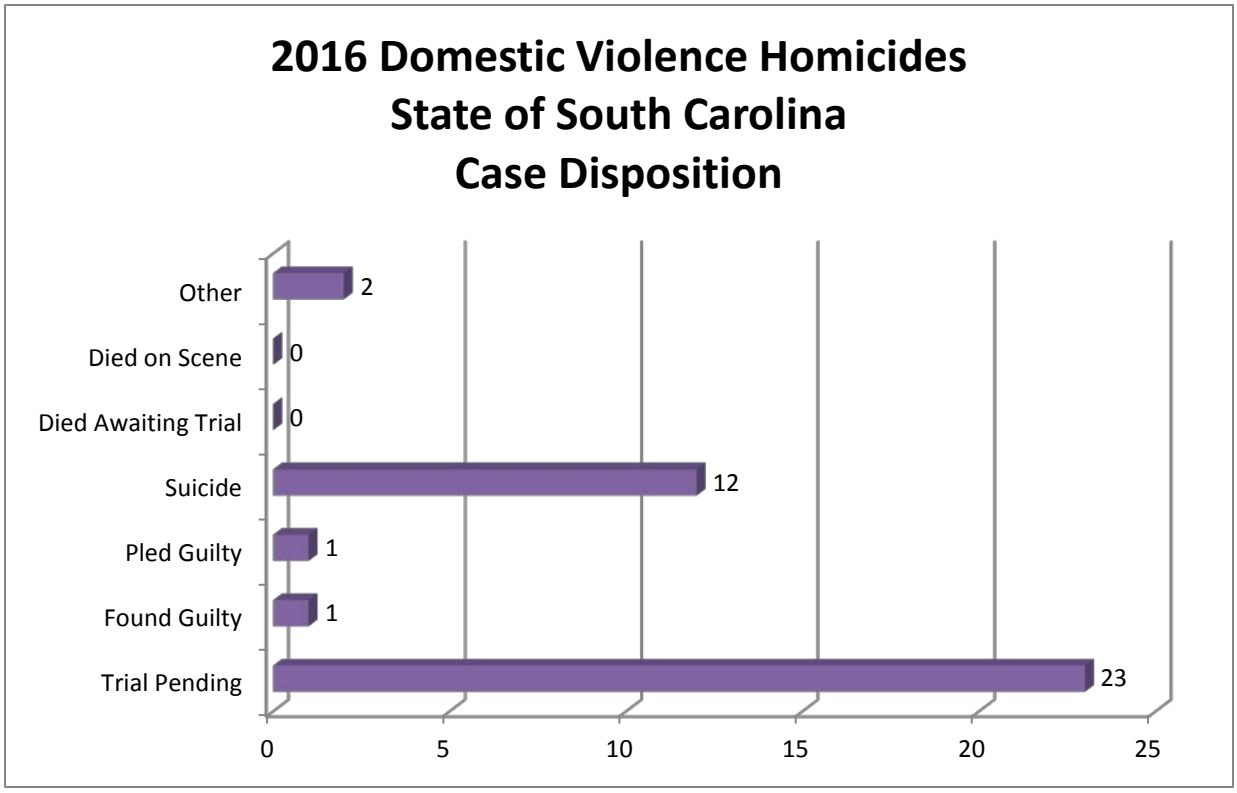
12 S.C. Code §16-25-10 defines "household members" as spouses, former spouses, persons who have a child in common, or a male and female who are cohabiting or formerly have cohabited.


2016 Domestic Violence Homicides
by Gender
State of South Carolina
13%
87%
Female
Male


2016 Domestic Violence Homicides
by Race
State of South Carolina
0%
46%
51%
3%
Black
Hisp/ Latino
White
Other


2016 Domestic Violence Homicides by Primary Weapon State of South Carolina
Other
1
Struck by/ against
2
Strangulation
3
Knife
6
Gun
27
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
Number of Incidents


2016 Domestic Violence Homicides by Month State of South Carolina
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
1
1
6
6
2
1
1
3
4
5
7
2
Jan
Feb
March
April
May
June
July
Aug
Sept
Oct
Nov
Dec
Month



County Statistics

Abbeville

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	1	Avg Age:	31
White:	1	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Hand/Other:	0		
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Aiken

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	53
White:	2	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	2	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:		Other:					
Disposition:	(2) Died by suicide						

Allendale

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:		Other:					
Disposition:							

Anderson

Women:	1	Men:	1	Total:	2	Avg Age:	50
White:	1	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	2	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	1		
Strangulation:		Other:					
Disposition:	Died by suicide; Trial pending for murder						

Bamberg

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
Whites:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Barnwell

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	46
Whites:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	1		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Beaufort

Women:	1	Men:	1	Total:	1	Avg Age:	47
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Berkeley

Women:	4	Men:	0	Total:	4	Avg Age:	42
White:	3	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	2	Struck by/against:	1		
Strangulation:	1	Other:	0				
Disposition:	(3) Trial pending for murder; died by suicide						

Calhoun

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Charleston

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	1	Avg Age:	38
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Cherokee

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Chester

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Chesterfield

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	1	Avg Age:	51
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	1				
Disposition:	Died by suicide						

Clarendon

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Colleton

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Darlington

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Dillon

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Dorchester

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	1	Avg Age:	61
White:	1	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Died by suicide						

Edgefield

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Fairfield

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Florence

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	29
White:	0	Black:	2	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	2	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	1		
Strangulation:		Other:					
Disposition:	Trial pending for (2) counts of murder; trial pending for murder						

Georgetown

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Greenville

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	42
White:	0	Black:	2	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	1	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Active warrant out for arrest; died by suicide						

Greenwood

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Hampton

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Horry

Women:	3	Men:	0	Total:	3	Avg Age:	32
White:	2	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	3	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	1		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Died by suicide; (2) Trial pending for murder						

Jasper

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	29
White:	1	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	1		
Gun:	2	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	(2) Trial pending for murder						

Kershaw

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	31
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Lancaster

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Laurens

Women:	1	Men:	1	Total:	1	Avg Age:	28
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Lee

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	41
White:	0	Black:	2	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Incompetent to stand trial; pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 13 years in prison						

Lexington

Women:	1	Men:	1	Total:	2	Avg Age:	63
White:	1	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	2	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder; died by suicide						

Marion

Women:	1	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	59
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Found guilty of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 17 years in prison						

Marlboro

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

McCormick

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Newberry

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Oconee

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Orangeburg

Women:	0	Men:	1	Total:	1	Avg Age:	58
White:	0	Black:	1	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	1	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for murder						

Pickens

Women:	0	Men:	2	Total:	2	Avg Age:	41
White:	2	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	1	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:	(2) Trial pending for murder						

Richland

Women:	4	Men:	0	Total:	4	Avg Age:	40
White:	1	Black:	3	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	3	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	1	Other:	0				
Disposition:	Trial pending for 2 counts of murder; (2) died by suicide; trial pending for murder						

Saluda

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Spartanburg

Women:	2	Men:	0	Total:	2	Avg Age:	38
White:	2	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	1	Knife:	1	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:				(2) Trial pending for murder			

Sumter

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
Whites:	0	Blacks:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Union

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

Williamsburg

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				
Disposition:							

York

Women:	0	Men:	0	Total:	0	Avg Age:	0
White:	0	Black:	0	Hispanic/Other:	0		
Gun:	0	Knife:	0	Struck by/against:	0		
Strangulation:	0	Other:	0				

Disposition: