

# The People of Laurens County

## Citizen of the Year - Vickie Cheek, Laurens County Coroner

By Vic MacDonald

Editor

For being on-call at all hours of the day and night, for leading a team of assistants that responds to situations that most people would rather not, for “taking control” of a crime scene, for working with local families often in the most tragic of times - and doing all this with compassion and professionalism - The Clinton Chronicle Horizon Citizen of the Year for 2021 is Clinton native Vickie Cheek.

“I would like to acknowledge the late Coroner Nichols, my family, staff, our delegates, and so many friends for their support and confidence in achieving my goal and being elected as the first female Coroner of Laurens County.”

Cheek often points to the mentorship of the late Nick Nichols, of Clinton, as a driving force in her work with law enforcement and in dealing with families - often during tragedies - as she leads investigations into Laurens County deaths. Nichols was a tireless advocate for his office and his assistants, and showed faith in Vickie Cheek by naming her as his chief assistant coroner. She joins other female officials in Laurens County - as clerk of court, treasurer, probate judge, and magistrate-judges - but in a capacity that traditionally for South Carolina is male-dominated work. As Coroner, Cheek works with forensic science and with law enforcement - with court officials as she provides testimony and with investigators of the State Law Enforcement Division.

“The hardest part of my job,” she says, “is investigating the death of a child. We all feel we should outlive our children, but death has no time limit.”

Cheek was with the late Nick Nichols from the beginning of his time in office.

“I’ve been interested in every aspect of the duties of a Coroner since 2001 when I was hired by Coroner Nichols as his administrative assistant. This was his first term as Coroner. I knew after working several months that I wanted to go the Criminal Justice Academy. I discussed this with Nick, and he and his staff were excited and supportive that I wanted to join their

team of investigators.

“I received my accreditation in 2003 and have been a part of this office for 20 years. Mr. Nichols was an outstanding mentor and advisor until his unexpected death in 2019.”

Born and raised in Clinton - “I love my small town,” Cheek says - she is a 1973 Clinton High School graduate, and a 1975 Greenville Technical College graduate as an Administrative Medical Assistant. Vickie Cheek has been widowed since 1997.

She has two sons and daughters-in-law: Brad (Jennifer) Cheek and Todd (Brandi) Cheek. She has two sisters and brothers-in-law: Kay (Billy) Glenn of Clinton, and Nancy (Rod) Thomas of Auburn, Alabama.

And, she proudly says, “two precious granddaughters - Jenna and Hannah Cheek.”

She enjoys relaxing at the beach and lake, while watching the beautiful sunsets, during rare times away from the job.

That job has seen Vickie Cheek as: administrative assistant, 2001-2003; deputy coroner, 2003-2006; chief deputy, 2006-2019; and interim coroner, 3-4-2020.

She was elected Coroner in November, 2020.

In addition to forensic science, she also has to know how to run a publicly-funded budget, and do it to the satisfaction of county administrators and taxpayers.

Especially in this time of pandemic, the work can be exhausting. For Vickie Cheek, the reward is work well-done and some small acknowledgements. “My job is not an easy one,” she says, “but my heart swells when I receive a call or card thanking me for being so compassionate, caring, and understanding while investigating their loved one’s death.

“These kind words are so appreciated from these families after the loss of their loved one.”

Coroner Vickie C. Cheek  
Laurens County Coroner’s Office  
216 West Main Street, Room 114  
Laurens, South Carolina 29360  
Office: 864-984-8804  
Fax: 864-984-2540.



Vickie Cheek is surrounded by her family in January 2021 as she is sworn into office as Laurens County's first female coroner. - Vic MacDonald photo

### What it takes to be a coroner in South Carolina

SECTION 17-5-130. Coroner qualifications ...

(A)(1) A coroner in this State shall have all of the following qualifications, the person shall:

(a) be a citizen of the United States;

(b) be a resident of the county in which the person seeks the office of coroner for at least one year before qualifying for the election to the office;

(c) be a registered voter;

(d) have attained the age of twenty-one years before the date of qualifying for election to the office;

(e) have obtained a high school diploma or its recognized

equivalent by the State Department of Education; and

(f) have not been convicted of a felony offense or an offense involving moral turpitude contrary to the laws of this State, another state, or the United States.

(2) In addition to the requirements of subsection (A)(1), a coroner in this State shall have at least one of the following qualifications, the person shall:

(a) have at least three years of experience in death investigation with a law enforcement agency, coroner, or medical examiner agency;

(b) have a two-year associate degree and two years of experi-

ence in death investigation with a law enforcement agency, coroner, or medical examiner agency;

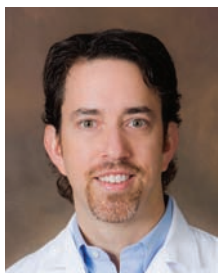
(c) have a four-year baccalaureate degree and one year of experience in death investigation with a law enforcement agency, coroner, or medical examiner agency;

(d) be a law enforcement officer, as defined by Section 23-23-10(E)(1), who is certified by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Training Council with a minimum of two years of experience;

Coroner, 10

## The right care at the right time.

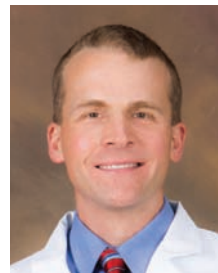
Family Healthcare Clinton  
(864) 833-5986



Peter M. Partee, M.D.



Louis M. Stephens, Jr., M.D.



Stanley G. Walsh, Jr., M.D.



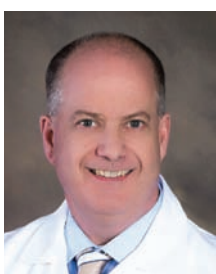
Jacquelyn B. Waldron, FNP

Offering primary, specialty and urgent care to treat all of your family's needs.

#### Specialty Services:

- Cardiology
- Counseling Services
- General Surgery
- Home Health Services
- Mobile Mammography Unit
- Occupational Health Services
- Orthopedics
- Physiatry
- Physical Therapy
- Spine
- Vascular

Internal Medicine Laurens  
(864) 833-0055



Brian Weirick, D.O.

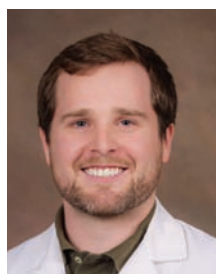


Susan Wells, PA-C

Express Medical Care Laurens  
(864) 939-1070



Amy Strickland, APRN



Nick Petrus, PA



Steve Pietrusza, PA

SELF REGIONAL HEALTHCARE

SELF MEDICAL CENTER LAURENS

22580 Highway 76 East  
Laurens, SC 29360  
www.selfregional.org



Happy 2021 from Carolina Health Centers



### LAURENS COUNTY COMMUNITY CARE CENTER

family practice office located at the Laurens County Memorial Hospital next to the ER

FOR INFORMATION:  
864.574.8304



Part of the  Carolina Health Centers Inc. family of care.

### HOMETOWN PEDIATRICS

Dr. Ashley Jenkins  
Dr. Christine Chard  
Dr. Daniel Lapp  
Rachel Robinson, FNP

500 Plaza Circle, Suite J  
Clinton, SC  
864.547.8300



### LAKELANDS FAMILY PRACTICE

Dr. Elcy Zimik

17124 Hwy 72 W  
Waterloo, SC  
864.393.1020



# Carolina Health Centers Inc.

Carolina Health Centers is a non-profit health care organization with primary care doctor's offices and pharmacies serving the Lakelands area since 1977.

Laurens County Community Care Center at Laurens County Memorial Hospital (next to the ER), Hometown Pediatrics of Clinton and Lakelands Family Practice of Waterloo serve Laurens County.

Our mission is to provide people with access to a medical home where they can receive high quality primary and preventive care regardless of financial, geographic or social barriers.

We accept most forms of insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid, and for those who qualify, including the uninsured, an income-based sliding fee scale is available.

Same-day primary care visits are available and walk-ins are welcome.



# Teacher of the Year - Ryan Caughman

By Vic MacDonald

Editor

Ryan Caughman believes in investing. He stresses that every class period in economics, but it might not be the kind of investing that Wall Street emphasizes. For his efforts in investing in our Clinton High School students, and investing his time and talents in School District 56, Caughman is the 2021 Clinton Chronicle Horizon Teacher of the Year.

Asked if there was anyone he would acknowledge for his success, Ryan gives an insight into the kind of investing he believes is most important.

"My Dad and Mom, Tom and Phyllis Caughman, cannot be thanked enough for showing me the things that are truly important in life. They taught me, but more importantly showed me, what it means to be successful in life. It has nothing to do with fame or fortune, but always doing what you can, where you are, with what God has given you," Ryan Caughman said.

Caughman saw his career path forward in college, as a means to an end - coaching athletics. He can relate to students who at

the end of their high school careers, or later in life, look back and say, "I could have done better there."

He says, "History was always my favorite subject when I was in school. Unfortunately, in high school I did not give academics my best efforts. I probably put way too much emphasis on athletics. My freshman year of college I decided I wanted to pursue a degree in Social Studies Secondary Education. I think the biggest reason I wanted to do this at that time was so I would have the opportunity to coach football.

"When I began doing my practicum and student teaching, I realized I enjoyed teaching in the classroom just as much as I enjoyed working with athletes on the field."

He sees many positives when asked, "What's the best part of your job?"

"There are so many things that are great about my job I could probably write you a book," Caughman said, "but we will keep it brief. I think the best thing about my job is having the opportunity on a daily basis to invest in the lives of people. I believe you can do this with any job, but I am passionate about what I do.

"I am an economics teacher and we talk about investing money in my class, but I al-

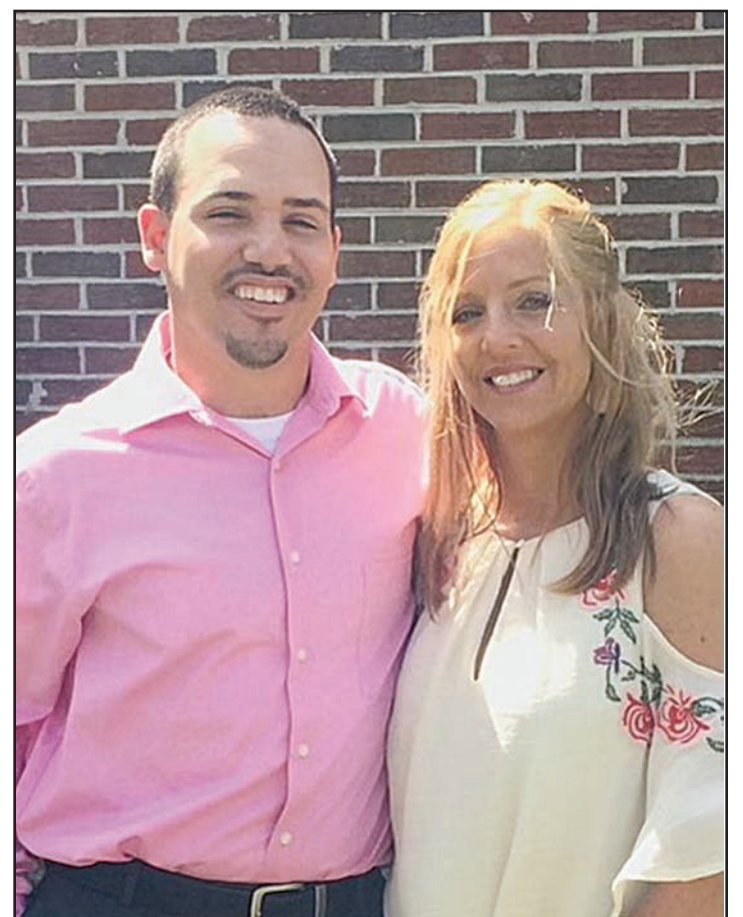
ways tell the students that the most important investment you can make is in the lives of other people. I also love that I have the opportunity to work with some of the best teachers, administrators, and support staff around that truly care about students. I am a firm believer in the statement 'you are only as good as the people you surround yourself with.'

"I am surrounded by some of the best." Asked the converse of that question, he responds, "As far as the worst part, I don't dwell on negatives because it is a waste of energy. I guess I would say paperwork and the unnecessary hoops that must be occasionally jumped through with any job."

Ryan Caughman has lived in Clinton his entire life, except for four years at Anderson University (1997-2001). His family is wife, Crystal; and their children are Austin (18), a student at Presbyterian College; Catelyn (17), and Madison (15).

"Just relaxing" from the pressures of the classroom, and the athletic fields and practices, is Caughman's favorite thing to do in his off-time. That downtime always includes being at home with family. "God has richly blessed me to be where I am today. I

Teacher, 5



Ryan and Crystal Caughman

"These are all outstanding applicants. In a school year that's going to be different, we've got excellent people. This has been a very exhausting year (2019-20), without question, and people like this are the only reason we can make any preparations at all. You can't do any better than the people we have right here representing all that we have going on. Yes, it's going to be different. Yes, it's going to be learning. But, it's going to be great. We are looking forward to the 2020-21 school year."

- Superintendent Dr. David O'Shields



Announcement of Teacher of the Year, on Aug. 5, 2020, at Clinton High School.



Austin, Catelyn and Madison Caughman.



**SADLER HUGHES**  
APOTHECARY  
*Since 1917*

PRESCRIPTIONS  
HOME MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

- 24-HOUR REFILL LINE: (864) 833-4000, and at [www.sadlerhughes.com](http://www.sadlerhughes.com)
- Shingles, Flu, Meningococcal, Pneumococcal, and Tetanus Vaccinations
- Fast, Friendly Service
- Proudly serving patrons since 1917
- Medicare Part D, Medicaid, and 99% of all other insurance plans accepted, including: CVS/Caremark, State Health Plans, TriCare, Medco, and Humana
- Medication Synchronization: get all of your prescriptions on the same day each month
- Prescription Discount Card on select medications
- Special Orders
- Compression socks & hosiery
- Braces, Bathroom aids
- OPEN 6 DAYS A WEEK: Monday-Friday 8:30-7:00, Saturday 8:30-4:00, Closed on Sundays and Holidays

102 Jacobs Highway, Clinton, SC 29325  
864-833-4000  
[www.sadlerhughes.com](http://www.sadlerhughes.com) • [sadlers@sadlerhughes.com](mailto:sadlers@sadlerhughes.com)



# DAVIS

BUSINESS SYSTEMS, INC.

Hometown Service at Superstore Prices

- Copy Machines
- Laser Printers
- Office Supplies

- New and Used Office Furniture
- MPS Certified



AUTHORIZED DEALER



PRINTING SOLUTIONS



659 N Harper Street  
Laurens, SC 29360  
Phone: 864-984-4958 (800-656-6357)  
Fax: 864-984-0285 (866-277-8791)  
[www.davisbusinesssystems.com](http://www.davisbusinesssystems.com)



# Brothers continues to develop strong relationships with students, parents one day at a time at Clinton High School

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

Dr. Martha Brothers is no stranger to Clinton. After spending nine years in Clinton as an assistant principal (2000-2009), the Pendleton native has spent the last two years taking on a new role: principal.

While attending Clemson University, Brothers initially majored in Financial Management, but later decided to take a different career path.

"I started to help coach the Pendleton softball team. I played softball in high school and I knew that's what I wanted to do," she said. "I didn't enjoy the thought of just sitting behind a desk. I love working with kids so I changed major and became an English teacher because I love English and Clemson didn't offer a P.E. major."

Brothers went on to teach in Anderson for a number of years before beginning to venture in administration.

"I had a principal that recognized I didn't write kids up and I had really good classroom management. He said you 'really ought to be an administrator.' He would pull me out of class, get a substitute and I'd fill in for the assistant principal a good bit and get my feet wet. So I went back to Clemson and got my degree and that's how I got into Administration. I came here and I taught English for two periods and I was an administrator for two periods my first semester and then Dr. Bridges made me a full time principal."

As principal, one of Brothers' main priorities is the safety of her students and staff.

"If they're not safe, you can't do any kind of teaching. Our job is to make teaching the easiest job for our teachers," she said.

Brothers also wants to continue building relationships with her students and their parents, allowing an open door policy for any questions or concerns. She said she wants Clinton High School to be "a place people are proud of."

On the opposite end of the spectrum, Brothers said the biggest obstacle she has faced is connecting with students who are completing schoolwork virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There are students who have never been in the building (9th graders). I don't know who they are and I don't like that, but we're working on that," she said.

Brothers and her staff are also working on ways to give the seniors a proper sendoff as social distancing and limited contact are still encouraged amid the pandemic.

"It's our job to figure out a special way to try to send them off with a good semester," she said.

She added that aside from holding a graduation ceremony, they would like to look at the possibility of holding an outdoor prom or a field days of some sort to "have some normalcy in the spring."

A self-proclaimed country girl and the first in her immediate family to graduate college, Brothers wants the students and parents to know that she is here to help everybody all while changing the misconception of principals.

"I want everyone to feel welcome in this school," she said. "Just because I call you to my office, doesn't mean it's a bad thing."

And with a pandemic still wreaking havoc nationwide, Brothers wants everyone to know that we're all in this together.

"We're going to get through this. My catchphrase to the kids is 'the tassel is worth the hassle'," she said.



This principal loves her school! Dr. Martha Brothers has served as Clinton High School Principal for two years. She said her main priority is to make sure she keeps her students safe. - Kelly Duncan photo

**"Our job is to make teaching the easiest job for our teachers."- Dr. Martha Brothers, CHS Principal**



**Life is Good.  
Just Add Water.**

**LIVE • LOVE • LAKE**  
Lake Greenwood, SC

Lake Greenwood is at the heart of Laurens and Greenwood counties and means so much to our quality of life. Laurens County Water & Sewer Commission is committed to preserving and protecting this important resource so it will be there to support our communities for generations to come.

**LCWSC** Trust in Every Drop

[www.LCWSC.com](http://www.LCWSC.com)

- High Quality Drinking Water
- Sustainable Water Source
- Economic Development
- Recreational Opportunities
- Vital Ecosystem
- Connecting Communities

864-682-3250 • 800-358-3445  
3850 Highway 221 • Laurens, SC 29360

"LIKE" US ON FACEBOOK  
[Facebook.com/LCWSC](https://www.facebook.com/LCWSC)

**Wilson Tractor**  
Celebrating **37** Years

Thanks to our Loyal Customers and the Laurens County Community!

**Everything You Need, For Anything You Need To Do.**

Kubota's full line of hardworking equipment has a proven reputation for high-quality engineering, versatility, power and reliability.

**WILSON TRACTOR, INC.**  
"FOR YOUR BEST BUY IN FARM EQUIPMENT"  
440 WILSON RD  
NEWBERRY, SC 29108  
803-276-1151

KubotaUSA.com



# Martha Franks Retirement Community is still staying true to its mission after 35 years

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

Many years ago, Martha Franks set out on a mission to build a Christian retirement community in Laurens County.

Born and raised in Laurens, Franks served as a missionary in China for over 40 years. Once she returned from China, she started campaigning for a retirement community in 1965 and on February 4, 1985 the doors of the Martha Franks Retirement Community were officially opened.

With 11 acres of land and over \$300,000 raised, 82 residents moved in during the first week – Franks and her sister were the first two residents who moved in.

“Initially there was independent living, assisted living and there was a nursing center,” said Pollyanna Franks, executive director. “Now we have three levels of independent living – not just the private homes, but we have patio homes, garden apartments for independent living residents. And now we have memory care, assisted living and skilled nursing, rehab, VA contracts and we do homecare services which is a new service.”

Over the years, Martha Franks has seen its share of changes. In 1995, they welcomed the addition of the nursing center, going from 44 to 88 beds.

“In the last eight years or so we’ve seen renovations on the entire campus in every area,” said

Lynn McQueen, director of marketing.

Franks added that as Martha Franks continues to serve the community, it’s important for them to continue to update and maintain the structures in order to provide the best service possible.

And in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Franks said they are also making sure to stay up-to-date with technology in order to connect residents with their loved ones whether it’s through written communication, window visits or plexi-glass enclosures.

“Our number one focus is to take care of our residents. We’re so pleased that none of our residents in the nursing center have contracted the virus,” she said. “The majority of our residents have already received the second vaccine so we’re hopeful that as their bodies make antibodies it will be safer for them to go out and be part of the community again.”

Moving forward, Franks said the Martha Franks Retirement Community still has more work to do. Some of this work includes modernizing and updating their physical plant, staying operational and functional and expanding to offer more services, with the possibility of more houses, to name a few.

Franks passed away in 1992, but her contributions to the community and her mission are still stronger than ever.

“Martha’s mission is just as strong today, but the honor really goes to our Heavenly Father. We believe in that strongly today,” she said



Serving Senior Adults Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow



# Teacher

From 3B

won the lottery when it came to parents.”

For 2021, Ryan Caughman also represents District 56 as its Teacher of the Year.

That announcement was made Aug. 5 on live television.

That morning, the WSPA-TV Morning Break crew visited Clinton High School in advance of school starting Sept. 8 in District 56, Clinton-Joanna, and in District 55, Laurens-Gray Court. Schools had been closed since March 17, 2020 because of the worldwide Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic, which now is stretching

into its second year.

“All these nominees represent who we are and who we try to be,” Superintendent Dr. David O’Shields said. “These are all outstanding applicants. In a school year that’s going to be different, we’ve got excellent people. This has been a very exhausting year (2019-20), without question, and people like this are the only reason we can make any preparations at all. You can’t do any better than the people we have right here representing all that we have going on. Yes, it’s going to be different. Yes, it’s going to be learning. But, it’s going to be great. We are looking forward to the 2020-21 school year.”

District 56’s Teacher of the Year Nominees:

- Emily James -- MS Bailey
- Bryan Lyda -- Clinton Elementary
- Shelby Britt - Eastside Elementary
- Caroline Wilkie -- Joanna Woodson
- Beatrice Ray -- Clinton Middle
- Ryan Caughman (award recipient) -- Clinton High.
- Support Staff Nominees:
  - Lisa James (award recipient) -- MS Bailey
  - Cyndi McMahan - Clinton Elementary
  - Deborah Wright -- Eastside Elementary
  - Kathy Jacobs -- Joanna Woodson
  - Laurie Addison -- Clinton High.



## SUMMIT CLASSICAL SCHOOL

JOIN THE SUMMIT FAMILY TODAY!

- Free public charter school
- Grades K-5
- Small class size
- Caring, certified staff
- Chromebooks for every child
- New facility
- Innovative, student-centered instruction
- Classical education model
- Parental Involvement
- Individualized student attention
- Family oriented atmosphere
- Effective and supportive school leadership



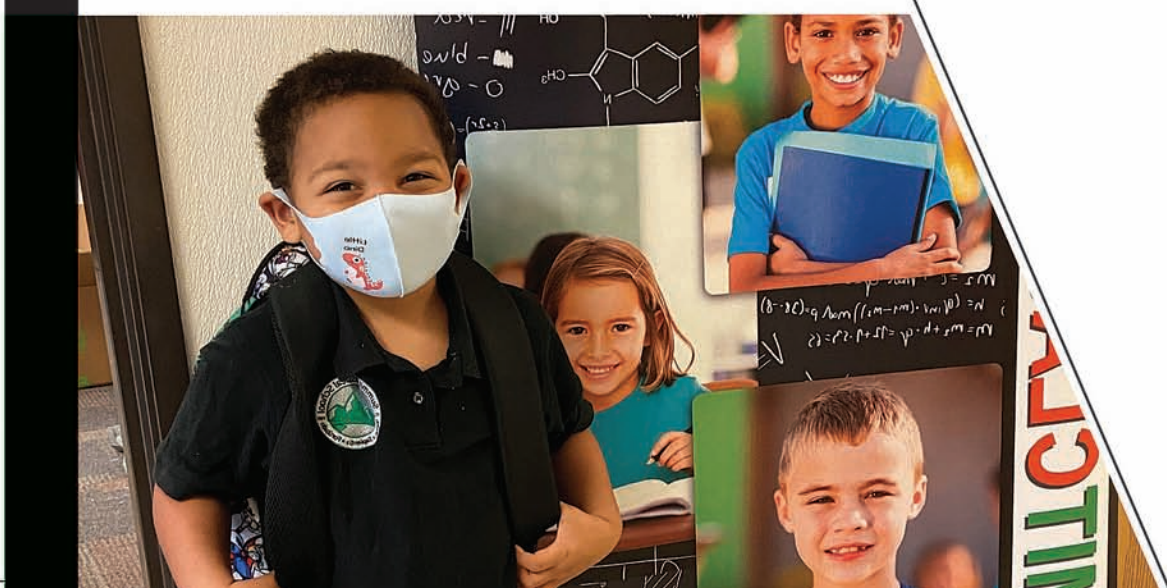
NOW HOSTING TOURS BY APPOINTMENT (864) 547-2018 FOR POTENTIAL SUMMIT FAMILIES.

Get a private school education for free!

The vision of Summit Classical School is to foster a school climate that molds the development of individual character, sets the stage for academic achievement, and establishes a lifelong pattern of success.

Curious to learn more? Visit our website at [www.SummitClassicalSchool.com](http://www.SummitClassicalSchool.com)

summitclassicalschool@gmail.com  
600 E. Florida Street, Clinton, SC 29325





# Laurens County School District



Where students become ethical and productive citizens by achieving excellence, embracing innovation, and forging new traditions.

## We will:

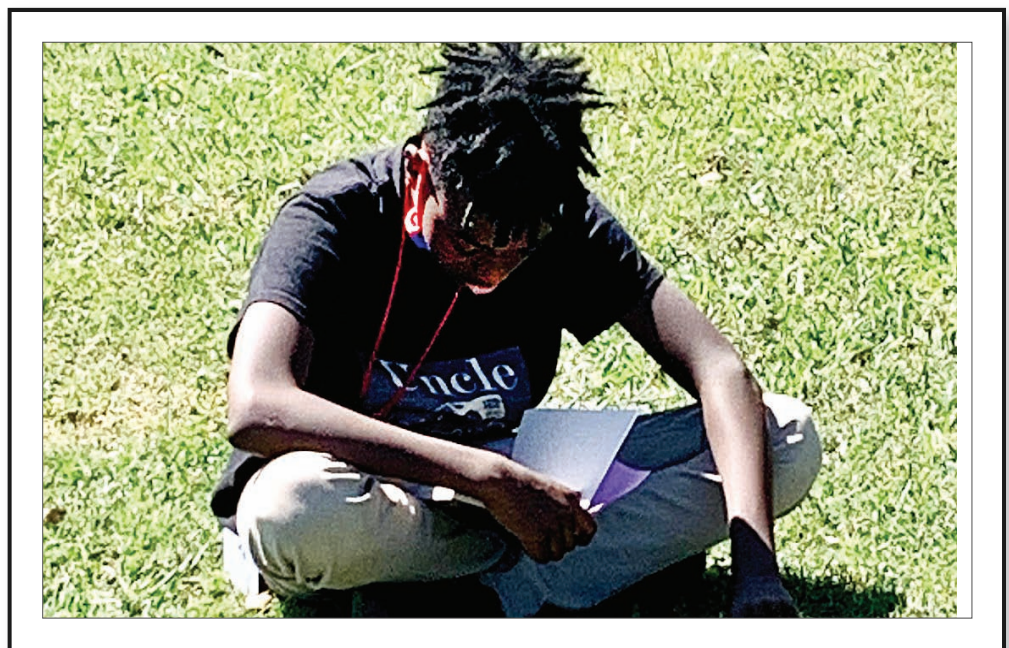
- Engage all stakeholders in the support of quality education and continuous improvement.
- Empower students to use technology resources to support learning.
- Educate in an environment that promotes creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, communication and character.
- Elevate the academic performance of each student to ensure readiness for the next level.

~ Constancy of Purpose ~  
All students will graduate college and career ready.

211 N. Broad Street - Suite B  
Clinton, South Carolina 29325  
864-833-0800

[www.lcsd56.org](http://www.lcsd56.org)

Dr. David C. O'Shields, Superintendent





# From Assistant to Interim City Manager, Higgs is excited for what's to come in Clinton

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

Clinton Assistant City Manager Thomas Higgs II knows a thing or two about small towns.

After a stint in Bishopville as City Administrator, Higgs, a Barnwell native, has worked alongside former City Manager Bill Ed Cannon and the City of Clinton staff since October 2019.

At the time this article was written, Cannon has since resigned from his position, effective immediately. During a recent City Council meeting, Council voted to appoint Higgs as the city's Interim City Manager.

In his tenure with the City of Clinton as Assistant City Manager and now taking on the role formerly held by Cannon, Higgs is using his 15 plus years of experience in legal, finance and politics to help Clinton continue to grow and develop into the thriving community he knows it could be. Although he's been with the City of Clinton for a short time, Higgs has already seen growth and is excited for what's to come for the town. According to Higgs, the city has a



Thomas Higgs

project list that is "almost doubling" which he said excites him.

He said there could potentially be new construction for some facilities, which include police and fire, along with city projects currently underway.

One of those projects moving forward is the construction of a new recreation complex. The proposed plans, which are subject to change, include an amphitheater, multipurpose fields, restrooms, shelter houses, the incorporation of a playground and walking/bicycle trails.

In addition to the recreation

complex, Higgs said they would also like to look into pursuing more economic development opportunities, commercial and residential development and continuing to make sure tax dollars are put to use in the best way possible.

"Clinton embodies the small town USA atmosphere. It's on the trajectory to grow and develop - that's one of my passions, maintaining what makes Clinton great," he said. "I just want to continue to support city administration in any way possible, helping our employees and personnel continue to grow and to create a culture that embodies the spirit of Clinton - the best of the City of Clinton."

As the city continues to grow, Higgs will use his experience and what he's learned from working with Cannon as he continues serves as Interim City Manager.

"Bill Ed and I made a great team. We had a very open dialogue with one another," he said.

Higgs also wants to make sure the same goes for the people of Clinton. He said he never wants to say no to anything, but if he does "it's because we really tried."

**"Clinton embodies the small town USA atmosphere. It's on the trajectory to grow and develop - that's one of my passions - maintaining what makes Clinton great."**

**- Thomas Higgs, Interim City Manager**



Diana Bramble, superintendent, Cowpens National Battlefield and Kings Mountain National Military Park. - NPS Photo

## Bramble named Superintendent of Cowpens National Battlefield and Kings Mountain National Military Park Revolutionary War

ATLANTA — National Park Service (NPS) South Atlantic-Gulf Regional Director Stan Austin has announced the selection of Diana Bramble as the new superintendent of South Carolina's Cowpens National Battlefield and Kings Mountain National Military Park, effective March 14. In her role, Bramble will also oversee management of Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail and Ninety Six Historic Site.

Bramble has managed the four units on temporary assignment since September.

"Diana brings experience caring for iconic landmarks with complex operations and stories critical to America's advancement as a democratic society," Austin said. "As we prepare to mark the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, Diana is wholly committed to protecting the parks' treasured resources and enhancing collaboration with staff, visitors, partners and gateway communities."

Bramble said, "The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. I am incredibly grateful to have been selected for this opportunity. The staff here

are profoundly dedicated to their work as caretakers of America's heritage. It is an honor to help lead the park as a team towards an exciting future with many opportunities for partnership and engagement in anticipation of the 250th commemoration of America's founding."

Bramble began her NPS career in 2011 as the supervisory horticulturist for Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. with responsibility for horticulture, arboriculture and grounds management.

Four years later, she became chief of maintenance at National Capital Parks-East, where she has managed the entire facility operations and project management portfolio for a vast set of resources spanning 8,000 acres, including historic homes, commuter parkways, earthen and masonry fortifications, working farms, marinas and a campground. Prior to joining NPS, Bramble worked six years at the Smithsonian Institution as a horticulturist. Supt. Originally from the Eastern Shore of Maryland, Bramble holds a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resources from University of Maryland and a Master of Professional Studies in sustainable landscape design from George Washington University.



The District 56 Board of Trustees

## Patti Nelson steps into new role as YMCA's Interim CEO

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

Patti Nelson has been part of the Clinton YMCA family for a total of 17 years, but is now stepping into a new role as Interim CEO while the position, formerly held by Gene Simmons, is waiting to be filled. Simmons served as CEO from August 1980 to December 2020.

Nelson's journey with the YMCA started at the front desk as an Administrative Assistant and over time has served as Business Manager and now Interim CEO.

"At the time, Linda Sparks was the Business Manager and I was her assistant. As that progressed and things changed I, five years ago when Linda retired, became the Business Manager," Nelson said.

Nelson was also the Business Manager for her family business, Tribble Building Supplies, for around 30 years before coming to the YMCA. After the business closed, Nelson saw an open position with the YMCA and has been there ever since.

Although she has a new job title for the time being, Nelson said her 17 years of experience has helped make the transition to Interim CEO fairly smooth.

"By starting at the front desk and then moving positions, I understand the whole working components to the YMCA. I understand the membership part and the billing, the programs and all the youth programming. One job has just built onto the next. While Gene was the CEO I would help him with certain things, so nothing is unfamiliar to me," she

said.

She added that despite only being Interim CEO for a short time, things have been crazy at the YMCA.

"Last week (January 4-8) was kind of crazy. The school system decided not to go back face-to-face so we ended up with our after school program having to extend a full day. Then we made the tough decision to cancel our youth basketball program this year because the COVID numbers were so high - and because of concerns from the parents," she said. "They were questioning whether to put their children in an inside sport, but we're starting to take reservations for baseball and softball which we think will be a great year because hopefully with it being outside there won't be any problems with COVID restrictions."

Speaking of restrictions, Nelson said the YMCA has continued to follow safety protocols, limiting the number of people who have access to the building on an hourly basis.

"We're looking forward to opening back up some and not having to be quite as diligent on keeping people from overcrowding an area," she said.

Moving forward, Nelson is prepared to train whoever will take on the job, but said she still has Simmons' number on speed dial.

"This job is more of a finance job than people realize. It's going to be a tough year. We've got to get our membership back up, there's a whole component of fundraising in this job. So all of that is ahead of us. It's been a great 17 years and hopefully I can bridge this gap until we can get somebody new to take this job full-time."



After 17 years with the Clinton YMCA, Patti Nelson is temporarily stepping into a new role as the YMCA's Interim CEO. She is filling the position held by former CEO Gene Simmons.

- Kelly Duncan photo



# Comprehensive dental care for your entire family



**Seth C. Reynolds, DMD • Dawn S. Reynolds, DMD**  
 85 Professional Park Road,  
 Clinton, South Carolina 29325  
 (864) 938-6002 • www.rfdentistry.com



# The Clinton Presbyterian Community, providing quality care for 45 years and counting

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

A common myth at The Clinton Presbyterian Community is that you have to be, in fact, Presbyterian in order to join the community. Executive Director Paul Pridmore debunked that myth – The Clinton Presbyterian Community serves all and has been doing so since the inception of the community in Summerville in 1958.

Now, there are a total of six communities – Columbia, Florence, Summerville, Foothills, Laurel Crest and Clinton. The Clinton Presbyterian Community first opened its doors 45 years ago. And despite having five additional locations, the mission statement is the same for all: “We are a compassionate, Christian ministry dedicated to enriching the quality of life for seniors of all faiths.”

“We’re called a Life Plan Community. That means we have a full continuum of care for all different types of lifestyles and retirement living from independent living, patio homes and apartments to assisted living, skilled care and short-time rehab,” Pridmore said.

An added bonus to the community, according to Pridmore, is that everything is almost all under one roof, unless a resident chooses to live in what is called a cottage or patio home.

“So you can visit your friends up and down the halls throughout, dine within the building,” he said.

And if residents are looking for a convenient place to grab a bite to eat, they can head over to Café 801 which was added a couple of years ago or enjoy the six-hole mini golf course in the community.

“Every year, we have our annual PCSC Olympics. We did not have it this year (due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic), but one of the Olympic games is putt-putt so we absolutely had to have this so we could practice and win,” Pridmore said.

And despite the pandemic, The Clinton Presbyterian Community is making sure its residents, who have recently received their second COVID-19 vaccine, are staying protected in addition to employees and those who enter the building.

“We do a thorough screening at the front

door, as you experienced, and we limited visitation immediately. We were one of the first places to do it even before it was required. Because we have the Support Management Services office in Columbia and we have a support team that supports all the communities, we were able to acquire PPE (personal protection equipment) and Clorox 360 machines,” Pridmore said. “Throughout COVID, people were still able to work out in our new workout room. We had to socially distance them, make them wear masks, make appointments, but they were still able to do certain things.”

Employees in the Nursing Center are tested twice a week while all other employees are tested once. Vendors from outside coming to see residents will receive a rapid test.

It’s because their residents have received the second vaccine that The Clinton Presbyterian Community has been able to lift some of its restrictions.

“We’ll be lenient with family members who can present their proof of vaccination as well, but we’ll still be very careful and cautious not to intermingle with a lot of extra people,” he said.

Starting March 1, as long as everyone is staying fully vaccinated and they’re not seeing increases in COVID numbers, residents in independent living will be able to start participating in activities together - in small groups.

He added the continuing goal of The Clinton Presbyterian Community is to make sure residents are kept as independent as possible, regardless of where they are at in the continuum.

“About four years ago, we took some of our assisted living rooms offline and we developed an affordable independent product called Heritage Court that has modest size rooms, some of them are larger. There are three meals a day and there’s no large, upfront entrance. That is something we did to cater to individuals who may not be able to afford something larger at our community, but still wanted the benefits of living in a Life Plan Community,” he said. “The focus is making sure we provide the highest quality of life and enriching their lives. We want to make sure our residents have the opportunity to enjoy their life, learn new things if they want to, have fun still...that just goes back to our mission statement.”



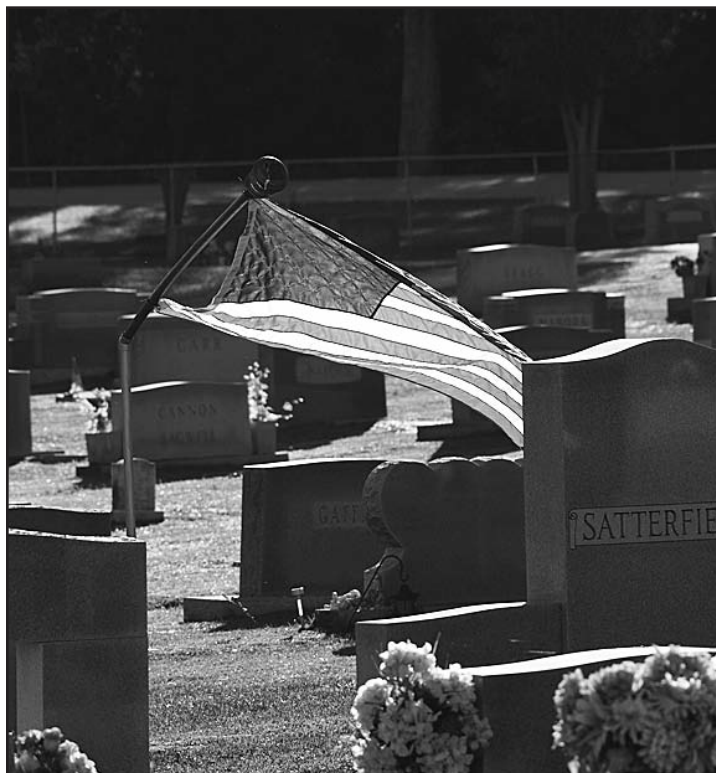
*“The best part of my job is that it is challenging, engaging, and fun. Challenging because each resident is different so we are able to create a unique individualized recovery plan. Engaging in that we work one on one with residents to reach that common goal that is person centered. And fun; we celebrate successes and enjoy new friendships. The fact that I am able to deliver a service that ultimately enriches the quality of a person’s life and gets them back to their home and life quickly gives me a great sense of self-worth and purpose.”*

– Nicholas Vickers, PTA – Director of Rehabilitation at the Clinton Presbyterian



*“About seven years ago my wife, Beverly, and I moved into a four room house for independent living in the Clinton Presbyterian Community. I was a little apprehensive because I was involved in a number of activities and interests. However the home and the town was just what we needed. We found new friends, opportunities for involvement, the help she needed and that I would probably need in years to come. She continued to use her talent in music. I was able to continue in ministry by supplying pulpits. I also could remain active in my hobbies of ham radio, RC airplanes, drone photography, woodworking and writing. Since Beverly’s death in 2015, I have served a local church as pastor to the present time. I have published three books and still send out a monthly newsletter. At my present age of 91, Clinton Presbyterian Community has been both an answer to my prayers and to my needs and interests.”*

- Francis M. Womack Jr., Clinton Presbyterian resident



**Pinelawn Memory Gardens**  
*Serving Laurens County Since 1976*  
**Perpetual Care Cemetery**

---

**Carolina Monument Company**  
 Marble • Granite • Custom Design  
 Perma Frame Portraits

---

28808 Hwy. 76 E, Clinton, SC  
 (864) 833-3413 • Fax (864) 833-9030



# Big D Butcher continuing to make a name for itself in Clinton community

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

Trevor Dendy, owner of Big D Butcher, knows a thing or two about working with poultry. Growing up on a farm, he said the process of slaughtering and processing poultry has become second nature to him.

Four years ago, Dendy opened up Big D Butcher. He said he wanted to give the people a Clinton another option when it came to buying their meat.

"I felt like Clinton needed another butcher shop/meat market because I felt like our area doesn't have the same quality of food that Greenville does or more affluent communities," he said. "I'm from Clinton and I pretty much know the area well. What we needed was better food and better meat. We offer very little from grocery stores as far as fresh food - major stores get items in frozen and then defrost them on the shelf or they're getting their ground beef in already ground which is a big thing period - for spaghetti, hamburgers, etc. When ground beef comes in already ground you lose the quality of meat."

At Big D Butcher, Dendy said they do everything from scratch so their customers can end up

with the best quality meat possible.

"Not all meat is created the same as far as quality. Some of them are more expensive because of that quality. I think it's necessary that people taste something different," he said.

He added that he doesn't really offer fruits and vegetables, but does try to offer them as a convenience.

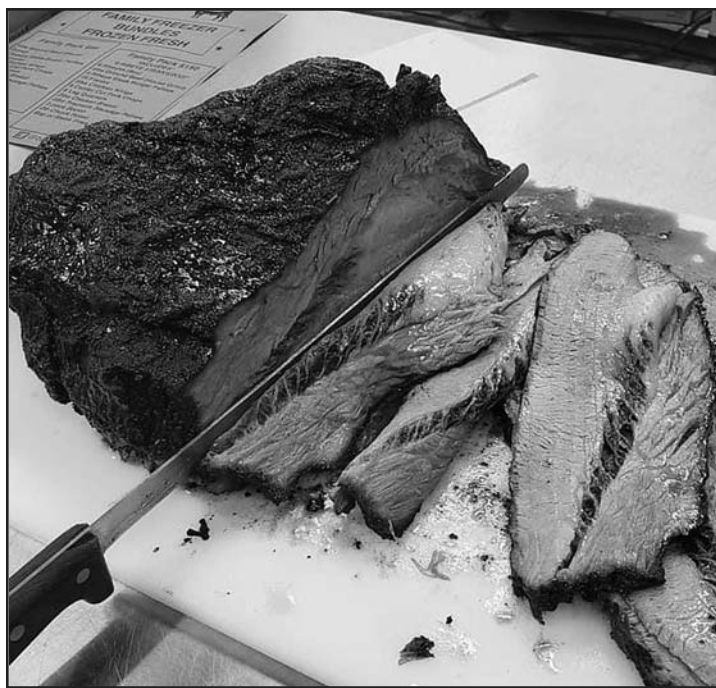
"I go far and wide to find the best products that I would eat myself and then I sell them to you because if I wouldn't eat it, I wouldn't sell it," he said.

Right now, Big D Butcher is open Thursday - Saturday from 11 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, he said to protect their customers and employees they have condensed their hours. They do plan to open up an extra day, potentially Wednesday or Sunday although a decision has not been made.

"We plan on offering private rooms for dinners, strictly reservation - families up to eight people for a private experience dining; plan your meal," Dendy said. "We offer a clean store, friendly and knowledgeable staff; we're now able to offer dinners - real pit barbecue and we cater. We do try to use less trash in packaging our food."



Big D Butcher opened its doors to the community in February 2017. Four years later, owner Trevor Dendy and his staff are continuing to provide the best quality meats to their customers. Located at 257 Torrington Road, Big D Butcher can also be found on Facebook. - Courtesy photos



# Presbyterian College names Dr. Matthew vandenBerg President

By Kelly Duncan

Staff Writer

*Note: This article previously appeared in the Feb. 10 edition of The Chronicle.*

Dr. Matthew vandenBerg knew since he was 21-years-old that he wanted to be a college president. His calling to venture into higher education has since become a reality after vandenBerg was recently named President of Presbyterian College.

The Michigan native's journey to becoming PC's President began as a young college student after a mentor took him under her wing and fueled his interest in college administration.

"She said I really believe that we'll need strong leadership now and in the decades to come," vandenBerg said.

Upon graduating from Alma College, vandenBerg took on his first role as a Coordinator of Services for International Students at a small, private college. After holding that position for a little over a year, he furthered his education by attending Indiana University where he received a Master of Public Affairs degree in nonprofit management, public policy analysis and fundraising.

After graduating from Indiana University, vandenBerg figured he would use his nonprofit and fundraising skills first, but instead found himself accepting an opportunity that fell onto his desk as a Policy Advisor and spokesperson to a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

"I knew that government relations, policy and advocacy are important parts of leadership so it made a lot of sense to take that opportunity. I ended up being the Foreign Affairs and Military Policy Advisor to the member who was the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee," vandenBerg said. "I ended up working on a lot of very important issues of strategic importance to the country. I did that for a couple of years and went through a particularly contentious collection as part of the staff. I wanted to be nice for a living, not necessarily being boiled in some of the dark underbelly of politics so much."

It was at this point that vandenBerg decided to step back into advancement and relationship-building. He became a Fundraising Consultant where he helped plan, develop and implement multi-million dollar fundraising campaigns.

His first campaign was in Biloxi, Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina. Here he partnered with them to help rebuild the Catholic school system in, raising \$21 million.

"That made me realize that's what I wanted to do with my life," he said.

vandenBerg continued this line of work for about 4-5 years, before returning to Indiana University where he took on the role of Assistant Dean for Development and Alumni Relations for the Information Technology School,



Dr. Matthew vandenBerg

followed by Albion College to serve as the Associate Vice President for Development and Alma College as the Vice President for Advancement and became Vice President for Advancement and External Relations.

"We did a number of different things, but my chief responsibility was running a successful campaign - our largest at that point was \$37 million. Alma College has now surpassed \$120 million in that effort," vandenBerg said.

In order to prepare for a career in higher education, vandenBerg received his doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania, focusing on how donors influence the decisions and priorities of small, private, liberal arts institutions and how they can partner with donors for mutually beneficial outcomes.

In his role as President, one of vandenBerg's top priorities is simple: get to know the students, faculty and staff.

"I come to this role with great respect for everything PC has accomplished. I'm humbled because I realize I stand on the shoulders of giants who came before me in this role. My top priority is to build relationships and earn trust. I have a lot of important work to focus on from the outset," he said.

It's the very same faculty and staff that first attracted vandenBerg to the position to begin with.

"PC has committed itself to doing the tough work it takes to be successful. There are amazing faculty here who are consistently pointed to by students as the difference makers in their educational careers," he said. "PC has thought about the different types of programs it might offer its students. PC really goes the extra mile for its students. Here you're not a number. You are more than just a name - you're a person, you have a story. Our staff are willing and able to move mountains to help you succeed. Those are incredible fundamentals to have at any institution."

Moving forward, vandenBerg wants to strive towards creating strong, lasting relationships with Clinton and all of its major players, from elected officials, students and parents, to local business owners. vandenBerg and his wife Melissa, along with their children Jackson, Sylvia and four-legged family member Honey are looking forward to being active, visible participants in the community.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to serve this institution and to be a resource as needed and as called up," he said. "My family and I are ready and excited."

# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF CROSS HILL

**SS 10AM WORSHIP 11AM FM 94.3**

**FIGHT LIKE U R THE THIRD MONKEY TRYING TO GET ON NOAHS ARK**

## ATTEND USC UNION LAURENS LOCATION TUITION FREE!

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA UNION

A Palmetto College Campus

LAURENS LOCATION

## COMING SOON

COWORK AT MIDTOWN

EST. 2020 LAURENS, SC

- Private Offices & Traditional Co-Work Space
- Competitive Rates
- Conference Rooms & Meeting Space
- Secure Entry
- Fast WiFi & Print/Copy Services
- Cafe & Cantina Area
- Physical Address to Receive Mail
- Completely Renovated Building

— RETAIL —

~ 1,600 sq ft ~ at street level for Rent

• SPRING 2020 •

Call for more information

BARRETT HOLMES  
(864) 569-6611



# Student group continues to grow amid pandemic

By Marley Bickley '22  
Courtesy of Presbyterian College

Staying socially distanced, adding face masks as part of the daily uniform, and carrying hand sanitizer everywhere has become the new normal for Presbyterian College students.

Despite these health and safety precautions, student organizations have gone the extra mile to ensure that their members feel included and active during these times. Rylee White, a senior from Mullins, S.C., has seen these impacts firsthand working with Delight Ministries, an all-female Christian organization on campus.

"Since Delight's main focus is building relationships, the changes we have faced have made the leaders become creative and especially intentional," White said.

"Weekly meetings now have a Zoom option and sometimes must be separated into multiple rooms. Last semester, we continued weekly meetings virtually and plan to do the same over this upcoming break."

White helped establish the



ministry on PC's campus in the spring 2019.

The ministry's mission statement is "to invite college women into a Christ-centered community that fosters vulnerability and transforms stories." White and other leaders continue to foster even in challenging conditions, occupancy limits, and long breaks from school.

"We also have plans to pair members as pen pals and maybe even have a book club over break," White said. "Though this has complicated things, our ministry has taken it full stride and still allowed space for the Lord to move."

White meets with other women on the leadership team every week. They plan events with COVID policies in mind and

allow for social distancing. The group opens events to the entire campus to foster community and friendship.

"We discuss curriculum, provide a space for vulnerability, build our friendships, and worship together," White said. "We try to make each week special in its own way. On top of our normal meetings, the leadership team plans community events and helps host campus-wide religious events."

Community events include brunch, weekly "delight dates," yoga, movie nights, and testimony nights.

White's senior year has been a unique experience to say the least. She's been busy leading an organization, applying for medical school, and trying to have a social life, all while facing a pandemic.

"I can confidently say that PC has continued to give the same quality education that they promised prior to this pandemic," White said. "The pandemic has also built my leadership skills by forcing me to adapt and remain intentional in my relationships with others."

# Coroner

From 1B

(e) have completed a recognized forensic science degree or certification program or be enrolled in a recognized forensic science degree or certification program to be completed within one year of being elected to the office of coroner;

(f) be a medical doctor; or  
(g) have a bachelor of science degree in nursing. ...

(C) Each person serving as coroner in the person's first term

is required to complete a basic training session to be determined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. This basic training session must be completed no later than the end of the calendar year following the person's election as coroner. A person appointed to fill the unexpired term in the office of coroner shall complete a basic training session to be determined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy within one calendar year of the date of appointment. This section must not be construed to require an individual to repeat the basic train-

ing session if the person has successfully completed the session prior to the person's election or appointment as coroner. A coroner who is unable to attend this training session when offered because of an emergency or extenuating circumstances, within one year from the date the disability or cause terminates, shall complete the standard basic training session required of coroners. A coroner who does not fulfill the obligations of this subsection is subject to suspension by the Governor until the coroner completes the training session.

# Olympic bound - Morgan Norris

By Zoe Montague '20  
Presbyterian College

Wrestling hasn't been a part of Presbyterian College sophomore Morgan Norris' life for long, but it has made quite an impact.

Norris was one of two PC students last year who earned the opportunity to compete at the USA Olympic Team Trials.

She, along with fellow sophomore Jaslynn Gallegos, won the 2020 Women's Collegiate

Wrestling Association and were supposed to go to the trials in April, but the competition was postponed due to Covid-19.

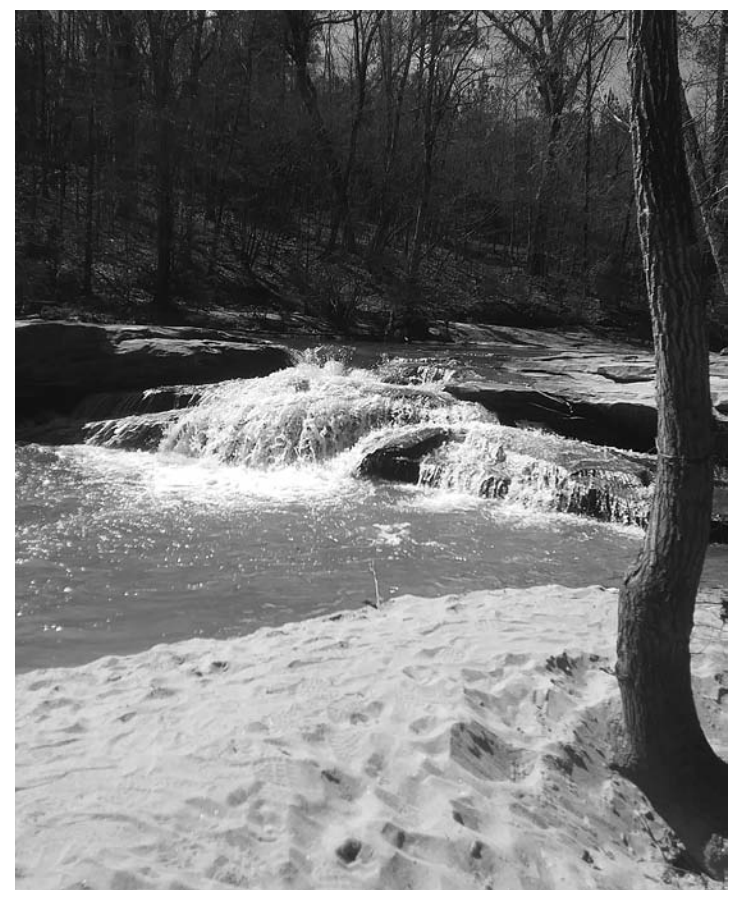
"It was a jaw-dropping experience and I couldn't believe it really happened. Throughout high school I'd always just imagine and dream of winning a collegiate national title and being able to put that into existence is a great feeling."

Norris' freshman year Biology teacher encouraged her to

first begin wrestling. "He said to me, 'You're going to wrestle and you don't have a choice,'" Norris said. "Now, obviously, I did, but I decided, 'Why not, what could be the harm?' And I was hooked by the coach's passion and commitment to his team."

Norris went on to win many titles during her high school career. During her junior year, she won the US Women's Wrestling

Norris, 11



## The Clinton Chronicle

When you become a subscriber, YOU SUPPORT WHAT MATTERS.

Your readership helps keep our staff reporting on the local developments affecting YOU.

Your readership encourages independent businesses to keep advertising and growing.

Most importantly, your readership helps keep our community CONNECTED, INFORMED and ENGAGED in democracy.

**Make a difference in your day and in your community by becoming a subscriber today!**

Subscribe today at...

864-833-1900 • www.MyClintonNews.com  
Or by Mail (See Below)

# Subscribers Like YOU

## Make the Difference

## Support Democracy - Support Community



for as little as 67¢ Weekly

**\$35 (year) in county; \$50 (year) out of county**

# The Clinton Chronicle

P.O. Box 180, Clinton, SC 29325  
864-833-1900 | MyClintonNews.com

To order by mail, please fill out and return this reply card.

## Your Billing Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a check or money order. Credit Cards may be called in.



# Alumna helps families displaced by fires

It was early Sunday morning on December 20 when Nickie Templeton '04 heard about the fire at Landau Apartments in Clinton that claimed the life of a four-year-old girl and left eight families without a home.

"I panicked because my cousins live in that apartment complex," Templeton said. "I could not reach them on the phone so I drove there."

Templeton found her cousins when she arrived.

"My cousin was holding the sister of the little girl who passed away in the fire," Templeton said. "I learned that the little girl who survived was one and literally had nothing. She

didn't even have a clean diaper to change into."

Templeton went to the store and bought essentials for the one-year-old.

"I knew in that moment that I had to do something because my heart was so heavy from being there," she said. "I know a lot of the people who live at Landau, and I wanted to help their children have a Christmas despite the tragedy."

"When I got home from the scene of the fire, I was overcome with raw emotion and sadness from what I saw," Templeton said. "The thought of all of those children not receiving gifts from Santa was too much



Nickie Templeton

for me to comprehend. "To me, it was personal because I know so many people

there, and my family lives there."

To help, Templeton challenged "everyone (she) knew" to donate so she could buy gifts and clothes for the 11 children impacted by the apartment fire as well as a fire at a house in nearby Joanna. It took only a day for Templeton to raise over \$4,000.

Templeton and a few others bought the items for the children, everything from stuffed animals and baby toys to a PlayStation and Xbox. All they needed now was a way to present the gifts to the children. Templeton asked First Baptist Church of Clinton, less than a

mile from the PC campus, to host a toy-reveal event.

"They were all in," Templeton said. Church members helped get the venue ready, organize toys, and played Santa for the children at the event.

"So many community members contributed with money, time, and donations," Templeton added.

Help When It's Needed Most

During the event, families received over \$2,000 in cash, and each child received gifts from Santa.

"We were fortunate enough to have News Channel 4 and Fox Carolina there," Templeton

said. "After we did an interview with them, more monetary donations were given to Arthur State Bank."

Brenda Stewart, a marketing professional who covers news in Laurens County, created a fund at the bank for the families displaced by the fire.

"At the event each family was so moved and grateful," Templeton said, "and I really feel like it gave each family the first taste of normalcy and sense of hope since losing everything in the fire."

"The expression on all of the kids' faces was absolutely priceless."

## Norris

From 10B

National Championship.

Looking into her future, Norris wanted to find a program that would help her continue to advance as a wrestler.

"I chose to come to PC for a multitude of reasons," Norris explained. "First, it is located on a beautiful campus with an amazing environment filled with great people. I also really liked the coaching staff and the visions they had for this program. For

my third reason, I would say, the overall atmosphere between the coaches, athletes, and school was the most comforting and welcoming environment out of any other school I visited."

There was another big reason that Norris felt drawn to PC. She was eager to have the opportunity to be a pioneer at the first Division One varsity Women's Wrestling program. "I was excited to be a part of something great!"

Life as a student-athlete in college is more strenuous than high school, but Norris has taken it in stride.

"Between practice schedules,

sometimes including practicing twice a day, taking on a full load of class and the accumulation of homework, it often leaves you with little wiggle room to do much else," Norris said. "But this is something I wouldn't ever want to change. I love waking up every morning and being able to push myself past new limits, that being in the practice room or even the classroom."

The 2020-2021 wrestling season is almost over, with the Women's National Collegiate Championship to be held Mar 6. This year's season had to be dramatically shortened, but the Wrestling program is working

through the challenges.

Norris herself is looking ahead. "Here at PC we strive to be year round athletes, meaning we will be in shape and prepared for any competition, any time of the year," she said.

As for the Olympic Team Trials, she is still preparing for those, too. She and Gallegos will hold their qualification spots for the Trials which will be held the first weekend of April this year.

"Taking the positive outlook on all of this, it can be thought of as just extra practice time to allow us to improve before actually competing at the Olympic Team Trials," Norris said.

## Wrestler leaves it all on the mat

By Zoe Montague '20  
Presbyterian College

College is a difficult enough challenge for most students, but as a student-athlete that is part of a fledgling program, Sophomore Zachary Phillips has had additional obstacles.

Phillips is a member of the Presbyterian College Men's Wrestling team. He wrestles in the 157 lb weight class and was recently named to the Southern Conference preseason All-Conference team.

This honor comes after being named to the All-Freshman team during the 2020 postseason, after going 6-2 his first year.

"It felt great, all the hard work I put in showed," Phillips said about hearing the news that he made the All-Conference team. "This is due to my teammates pushing me to become better everyday. My trainer and coach made things smoother, too."

Phillips has been wrestling for most of his life. "Watching WWE as a kid persuaded me to hop on the mat," Phillips said.

Before coming to PC, Phillips wrestled at Mount Saint Joseph

High School in Baltimore, MD.

"I decided to attend PC because of Coach Mark Cody," Phillips said. "He's a great mentor and only wants the best for me."

"I wake up and get ready for 6 am practice, then attend my classes throughout the day," Phillips explained. "After the afternoon practice ends, I finish up my school work and head to bed. I eat healthy all day and head to sleep."

This busy student-athlete life is what Phillips considers his biggest hurdle during wrestling season. "My biggest challenge is managing my schedule," he said.

The number of matches was decreased from 14 to nine, and two of those nine were cancelled due to Covid-19 concerns.

This hasn't deterred Phillips, however. "My goal is to go out there and compete knowing I gave it all I got," Phillips said. "I want to leave it all on the mat."

This mindset certainly shows. Phillips is 6-2 going into the upcoming championship tournament, the same statistic that led to his being named to the All-Freshman team this time last year.



# NHC

NATIONAL HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

FAMILY ISSUES HIT CLOSE TO HOME.  
THANKFULLY, NHC IS NEVER FAR AWAY.

Quality long-term skilled, respite, and outpatient care including physical, occupational and speech therapy in a warm, personalized environment.

Patients and residents feel at home at NHC HealthCare centers, where there's a long history of providing exceptional rehabilitative, skilled nursing and extended care in locations that are close to home and family. What makes us especially proud is having done so with the kind of compassion and personal attention that people are more accustomed to seeing from close friends and family.

It's that kind of care National HealthCare Corporation has been pioneering since 1971.

Our Mission

At NHC, care is our business. Care that respects the individual. Care that promotes recovery, well being and independence. Care that seeks to meet all standards of quality.

Caring for the families of Laurens County

NHC HEALTHCARE, CLINTON

304 Jacobs Highway • Clinton, SC 29325 • (864) 833-2550

NHC HEALTHCARE, LAURENS

379 Pinehaven Street Extension • Laurens, SC 29325 • (864) 984-6584

On behalf of the Mayor, Council members and citizens of Gray Court, we extend a warm welcome to you. The Town of Gray Court has a lot to offer.

We are located in the northwest corner of Laurens County, with access to Hwy. 385. Geographic location near cities such as Greenville, Spartanburg and Columbia. We are located within 30 miles radius to Greenville-Spartanburg Airport.

The Town of Gray Court was incorporated on Oct. 17, 1899. Gray Court has many historic homes, churches and businesses, and the grounds of the Gray Court Owings Schools are on the National Register of Historic Places. Gray Court, an area poised for quality growth, is located south of Greenville.

Town of Gray Court | South Carolina | Phone: (864) 876-2581

"We are striving to improve."

Come Grow With Us



# Junior establishes NAACP chapter on PC campus

By Marley Bickley '22  
Courtesy of Presbyterian College

Trinity Williams, a junior political science major, is founder and president of the newly formed National Association for the Advancement of Colored People chapter on campus. She first gained experience working with the NAACP over the summer, and was instantly inspired.

"Working with the Greenville branch of the NAACP this past summer inspired me to start a chapter on campus," Williams said.

"During my internship, the Greenville branch invited me to a racial forum they hosted with WYFF News 4 and the Greenville Mayor. I was able to see the change they helped implement in the community, and I wanted to be able to have an impact on the community as well, especially at PC."

The chapter on campus has gained many members since its beginning, currently having 36 active members and 54 potential members. The chapter is waiting to be officially chartered under both the state and national branches. Then they will be able to expand and add more members to their chapter

and continue recruiting.

"I believe this chapter will be very helpful to the PC community and the community surrounding PC," Williams said. "There are not many organizations on campus that are consistently involved with the minority communities outside of PC's campus. I hope the chapter will be able to be more hands-on with minority communities surrounding the campus through outreach and community service."

The chapter's work toward these goals this year have included working with student voter registration, the Laurens NAACP Branch, and the Greenville County League of Women Voters. The chapter also involved the Greek community through a fundraiser fair that provided educational information to fraternities and sororities about the importance of the NAACP and what all the organization stands for, as well as a campus-wide march against racial inequality.

"Overall, I believe having this chapter on campus will educate students while also allowing students to work with people outside of campus," Williams said. "It will expose students to different cultures and different opportunities."



In 2020, the two newspapers of Laurens County received important awards.

The Clinton Chronicle (started in 1900) was named the winning newspaper of General Excellence in the under 3,500 circulation category. There are 36 SC newspapers in this category.

The Laurens County Advertiser (founded in 1885)

was named the winning newspaper of General Excellence in the 3,500-7,500 circulation category.

The 2021 awards will be available for announcement on March 1.

\*\*Photos in this guide by Vic MacDonald, Fletcher Pruitt Jr., Brian Whitmore and Kelly Duncan.

**State Farm** is there for you when you need us most.



LIKE A GOOD NEIGHBOR,  
STATE FARM IS THERE.®

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, State Farm Indemnity Company - Bloomington, IL

**Auto Home Renters Business  
Life Health Retirement  
Mortgages Vehicle Loans**



Call or stop by for your free rate quote today!

**Matthew H Davis, Agent**  
906B South Broad Street  
Clinton, SC 29325  
Bus: 864-833-5036  
matt.davis.mtwo@statefarm.com

**Providing Insurance  
and Financial Services**

statefarm.com®



Trinity Williams

**City of**  
**Laurens**  
**South Carolina**

[www.cityoflaurens.com](http://www.cityoflaurens.com)  
126 East Public Square | (864) 984-3933

**HUSTLER**

**20% OFF MSRP**

Purchase an X-ONE®, Super S®, Super Z®, Super 88, or HyperDrive® zero-turn mower, and take 20% off the MSRP of the mower.

See Hustler dealer for complete details.

OFFER AVAILABLE  
3/1/21 - 3/31/21

**King's Outdoor Power Equipment**  
28825 Hwy. 76 East, Clinton  
(864) 833-1979  
kingsoutdoor@bellsouth.net





History has shown that creativity continues even in pandemics. At Lander University, the arts have flourished over the past nine months as evidenced by this sculpture class taught by Doug McAbee, associate professor of art.

- Photo by Laura Brown.

# Lander faculty, students prove arts flourish even in pandemics

GREENWOOD - Throughout history, artists have found ways to continue their work during plagues and pandemics. Norwegian expressionist artist Edvard Munch, famous for "The Scream" painting, survived the Spanish flu. The illness led him to paint "Self-Portrait After The Spanish Flu" in 1919, which depicted the artist, wrapped in a dressing gown, near a bed.

Leonardo da Vinci survived a series of bubonic plagues that struck Milan, Italy, between 1484 and 1485. Those outbreaks inspired the Renaissance artist to design concepts for a future city that he illuminated through drawings and notations to address urban planning problems between 1487 and 1490.

COVID-19 led Belgian artist Erik Pevenagie to say that poets, artists, and musicians will carry the world into a new reality after the pandemic. "They are the ones who tell us how to navigate, breathe, feel, think, enjoy, and fully live our lives."

**Elizabeth Snipes-Rochester, Painting**

"The obstacle is the path." For Elizabeth Snipes-Rochester, these words became crucial to solving the challenges that many artists faced when COVID-19 forced faculty and students to continue their instruction online - away from University studios and face-to-face instruction.

While many people grappled with the technological challenges of learning, artists refused to let a virus destroy their creativity, said Snipes-Rochester, an associate professor of art.

"We just leaned into what was happening and moved forward," she said. "Art flourished during the early months of the pandemic, and it continued to flourish during the fall semester. In the spring, we turned to technology for teaching. Students created in-home studios, and I made videos to help my students."

As she spent time at home with her husband and young daughters, Snipes-Rochester said she had the opportunity to create a new body of artwork for herself, as well as develop video demonstrations to teach students as an extension of their face-to-face instruction. Art faculty met regularly online to discuss how they could make the work relevant for students and keep them engaged.

"It may have been challenging at times, but we found ways to persevere," she said. "I kept reminding my students that during World War II, for example, we saw an increase in the number of patents. In times of turmoil and challenge, people find alternative ways."

During a fall class, Snipes-Rochester worked with young painters assembled on the second floor of Lander's Art Annex. Their assignment was to create self-portraits on canvases. All wore masks and were social distanced from their peers. But the paintings, rich with color and intriguing individual concepts, underscored a determination to be creative.

"We are visual problem solvers. We came together, and we have thrived," said Snipes-Rochester.

**Sandy Singletary, Ceramics**

As students were leaving campus in March, Sandy Singletary rushed to send her students home with equipment, including pottery wheels, so that they could complete their ceramics assignments.

Lander, 15

## Melissa, how's the market in Clinton?

**Average Days On Market**

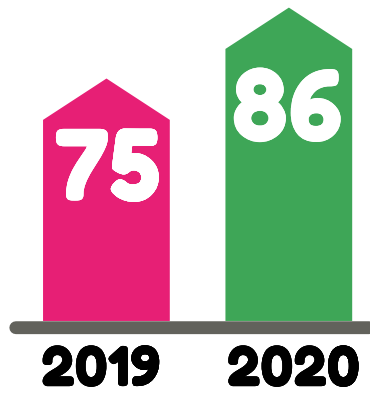


**Average Sales Price**



**Average Sales Price**

**Number of Homes Sold**



**It's a Great Time to Sell! Let's Chat!**

*Melissa Patton*

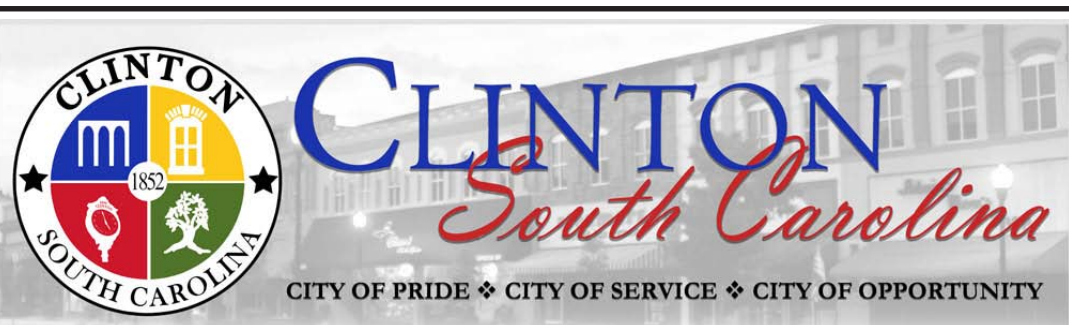
**864-923-7924**

**KW ONE**  
KELLERWILLIAMS.



*You'll be going to Love it here!*

Calculated using GGAR statistics for sold homes.



[www.cityofclintonsc.com](http://www.cityofclintonsc.com)

**M.S. Bailey Municipal Center**

211 North Broad Street, Suite A

Main Number 864.833.7500

City Manager 864.833.7505

Human Resources 864.833.7503

Planning & Inspections 864.833.7517

Utility Billing 864.833.2790

**Department of Public Works**

1219 Gary Street 864.833.7520

**Fire and Police Departments**

404 North Broad Street

Non-Emergency 864.833.7512

Municipal Court 864.833.7538



### Bringing our customers quality in products & services

With your safety in mind, please call 811 before you dig. This will protect you and your property, and prevent interruption of vital services.

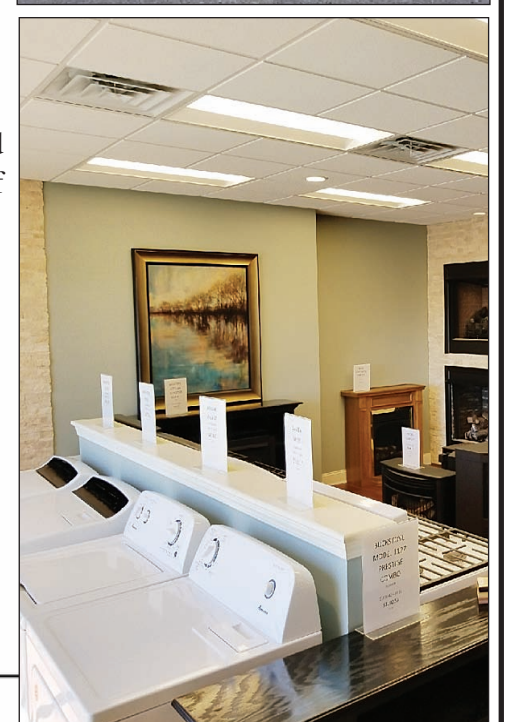
**Service:**

Natural gas is a clean, cost effective source of energy. CNGA is proud to offer affordable service and competitive rates.

**CNGA Products:**

Visit our showrooms at the Clinton and Newberry offices and view a wide range of appliances.

- Standard and Tankless Water heaters
- Ranges and Washer/Dryers
- Space Heaters
- Natural Gas Grills
- Natural Gas Logs



**The Clinton-Newberry Natural Gas Authority**

1643 SPRINGDALE DRIVE • P.O. BOX 511

CLINTON, SC 29325 • (800) 221-8109 • (864) 833-1862 • www.cnga.com





# Living in Laurens County....



**CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY**

It is our mission at PCSP to promote personal and community well-being through health and resource awareness and educational programming. We are committed to serving our community through the PC Community Care Pharmacy and Wellness Center. We've also partnered with the Good Shepherd Free Medical Clinic of Laurens County to better assist the needs of our community.


For more information visit our website at [pharmacy.presby.edu](http://pharmacy.presby.edu) or contact us via phone at 864.938.3900.



The Clinton Chronicle • We put Clinton, SC first

Lander

**Danny Verdin**  
 STATE SENATE DISTRICT 9  
 Chairman  
 Senate Medical Affairs Committee




**SENATE ADDRESS:**  
 P.O. Box 142, 412 Gressette Building, Columbia, SC 29202  
 Phone: (803) 212-6250 • email: dannyverdin@scsenate.gov



**96.5 FM 1410 AM**  
**Beach, Boogie, Blues and Music from Beyond**  
[www.largetime.net](http://www.largetime.net)

Enjoy freedom from home ownership worries, a simpler lifestyle, more time for the things you love most, and the peace of mind that is uniquely available at a Life Plan Community!

- Patio Homes & Apartments
- Assisted Living
- Medicare Certified Short-term Rehab
- Outpatient Rehab
- Memory Support

**2020 Voted The Best:**  
 • Retirement Community  
 • Assisted Living  
 • Skilled Nursing

Contact Dina to schedule a visit:  
**(864) 939-0590**  
[Dina.Hair@PresComm.org](mailto:Dina.Hair@PresComm.org)

**THE CLINTON PRESBYTERIAN COMMUNITY**  
 Presbyterian Communities of South Carolina  
 801 Musgrove St. • Clinton, SC  
[PresCommunities.org](http://PresCommunities.org)



**GateWay Counseling Center**

**THERE IS HOPE**  
 Outpatient Services  
 Adolescent Services  
 Prevention Programs

219 Human Services Road, Clinton • 864-833-6500  
[www.gatewaycounseling.org](http://www.gatewaycounseling.org)

**WHEN IT COMES TO BELOW-AVERAGE TEMPERATURES, IT'S GOOD TO HAVE A LOCAL UTILITY WHOSE RATES ARE BELOW AVERAGE FOR THE 8<sup>th</sup> YEAR IN A ROW!**

**Laurens Commission of Public Works' Residential Customers' Natural Gas & Electric Rates are BELOW the State Averages for the 8th Year in a Row!**

ELECTRICITY RATE COMPARISONS	NATURAL GAS RATE COMPARISONS
Laurens CPW 12.62 cents per kWh	Laurens CPW \$12.22*
State Average 12.87 cents per kWh	State Average \$26.07*
National Average 13.17 cents per kWh	National Average \$18.41*

\*per thousand cubic feet. Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration (www.EIA.gov).

**WHEN IT COMES TO WHAT YOU PAY FOR ENERGY, BELOW AVERAGE IS A GOOD THING!**

From 13B

ments. "It was challenging. Many of the online teaching resources available didn't fit well with ceramics' tactile and hands-on needs," said Singletary, chair of Lander's Art Department. "I had no idea how the semester would go."

Singletary produced her own videos to help students learn at home. By doing so, she enhanced her own skills for the classroom. "I became a better educator through this experience," she said, noting that students became more engaged in their classes. "The burden of doing this was on them as they watched my videos and completed assignments away from campus."

Singletary, whose own ceramics creations are sold to collectors, said students set up studios in their families' garages and kitchens or in outdoor spaces. "That is a true level of commitment. Not a single one quit. I am proud of how they navigated all of the challenges. Since they've returned to campus, my students have been working harder than ever."

Many of them created items for Lander's annual holiday Ceramics Sale. "Our art faculty have worked hard this semester to give our students normal levels of interaction. We've adhered to the public health guidelines, and that has been part of our success in learning this semester," she said.

"Art is emotional. The creative process is so personal. The desire to create, even during a pandemic, doesn't go away," Singletary said. "When you move forward, as we did, something creative is going to happen."

**Doug McAbee, Sculpture**  
 Just days into the fall semester, students in Doug McAbee's sculpture classes could be heard using power tools or hammering metal into new works of art. Nearby onlookers saw sparks flying during a welding class.

It was a different scene than the one in March when students returned home, just as they were beginning their metal project assignments. Instead of the large-scale artworks that many had planned, they worked with string and wire and other items accessible in their homes, said McAbee, a painter and sculptor who used the time for his own creative projects.

Advanced sculpture students worked with food or items found outdoors. "Students created an amazing body of work for the semester," said McAbee, an associate professor of art. "Some have portfolios that they can submit for juried art exhibitions. In some ways, the pandemic probably helped students."

When students returned to campus, "we hit the ground running," he said. "Students were eager to create. I restructured the curriculum so that we would do welding first, for example, in case COVID-19 cases closed campus. Fortunately, that didn't happen."

In October, McAbee had his own work highlighted in a critically acclaimed exhibit, titled "Instagram Remix," at the Center for Contemporary Art in Columbia. His works, created during time away from campus, were from a series of Instagram posts featuring paintings by famous artists shown side-by-side with his own interpretations of those artworks.

The enthusiasm for the fall semester was inspiring for students and faculty. "During time away from the studio, students took the separation to heart, and they made up for lost time," he said.

**Haley Floyd, Drawing and 2-D Design**  
 "Much more self-driven than ever before" is the way Art Lecturer Haley Floyd describes her students, most of whom are in the early stages of their art studies.

When the pandemic closed college campuses, Floyd said "students were in the middle of learning, and it is difficult to teach studio art online."

But all found a way to make the virtual experience a successful one. Video sessions and critiques enabled students to continue their art assignments, and Floyd produced video demonstrations of sessions she would have taught in person. "This is good resource material for the future," she said.

The separation brought its own lessons, she said, including those on problem-solving and time management "which are great life skills."

Removed from the classroom structure, students learned to overcome fears of failure. "Students want to succeed. But failure is a form of knowledge," she said. "They learned to take risks,

even if it meant not succeeding the first time. The work that they did was really hard, but they learned to work independently. Everyone faced different challenges."

She applauded the students for creating their own home studios and making "the work on their own. In a way, this was an opportunity to learn in a very unusual way. The timing wasn't great, but they saw the possibilities and adapted."

Even in a time of isolation, Floyd said, "We can turn to art and work through the feelings that we might have because of it."

**James Slagle and Fathima Nazim-Starnes, Graphic Design**

Lander's graphic design program boasts numerous successful alumni who are working for many of the nation's top businesses and industries, said James Slagle, a professor of art, and they continued to do so during the pandemic.

That success was underscored by another achievement during the pandemic: Lander's new bachelor of design (BDes) in graphic and interactive media, developed by Slagle and his colleague Fathima Nazim-Starnes, which was approved by the S.C. Commission on Higher Education. The first such degree program in South Carolina – and among the first in the nation -- provides students with the tools, skills, knowledge and experience to creatively express and develop ideas through the latest design technologies.

Lander's graphic design students and faculty had "no lag time" as they switched to work remotely in the spring, said Nazim-Starnes, an associate professor of art.

The University's Internet Technology Services department worked to help students have the necessary computers and software to work from home. "Our students worked throughout those months to complete assignments," she said. "It was gratifying to see the results of their work and creativity."

That same "can-do" spirit was evident throughout the fall, said Slagle, noting that some classes were conducted through face-to-face instruction, while others were hybrid, offering a blend of online and in-person classes.

Remote learning isn't unlike the real world of design. "In our industry, it is not uncommon for people to work with clients all over the nation and around the world," Slagle said. "They do their work from home or small offices and are able to produce outstanding designs for their clients. In some ways, our students got this experience a bit earlier than they might have."

Graphic designers find their jobs change as quickly as new technologies become available, Nazim-Starnes said.

"We adapt," she said. "The design world is constantly evolving, and our students have learned this."

Slagle said graphic designers "don't get into this field if they are not open to change."

He explained, "We encourage our students to teach themselves beyond the classroom. That is the best way to learn. Throughout the pandemic, our students adapted to changes, just as they will in their professional careers."

**Jon Holloway, Photography**

As a professional photographer and a professor of art, Jon Holloway saw remote learning as "a novel way of thinking about the creative process."

It was important in the spring semester, he said, to make sure that Lander's photography students had the equipment and resources they needed to complete their assignments.

After that came the all-important effort to incorporate technology into the learning experience. "Overall, this is making us better professors," he said.

Students found ways to change the course of some projects as they adapted to health guidelines that wouldn't allow interaction with people – often the focus of their work. "I think that they did a great job," Holloway said.

When students returned in the fall, one of the first activities on campus was the "Emphasis" senior exhibition, featuring the works of Lander art students who graduated in May. The art exhibitions, held in the fall and spring for upcoming graduates, highlight art across the disciplines. But COVID-19 led to the cancellation of the spring exhibition, which was rescheduled for the fall. December graduates had their exhibition open as scheduled in November.





## You Help Give the Gift of Joy!

Thornwell is starting 2021 strong because we are sustained by our joy - joy that comes through our hope in Christ, and the life change in those we serve. Thanks to you, they are experiencing the goodness of God.

### A legacy of hope and healing.

For nearly a century-and-a-half, Thornwell has met the call for help from society’s most vulnerable—its children and families in need. Today, we continue with the same spirit of hope to equip, train, and empower children and families to strengthen their relationships and live their best lives together.

### We help children and families.

**Thornwell is “Building Tomorrow’s Families”, and that begins with nurturing and strengthening the family unit.**

Our first and primary goal is to ensure that the children and families we serve receive the immediate attention they need to overcome emergency situations. We further assist that child and their family with ongoing services to help them heal and become whole again.

### The need is great!



South Carolina ranks **39th in child well-being.**



**Children and adolescents with foster care experience are diagnosed with PTSD at twice the rate of U.S. war veterans.**



**54,000 calls** about a suspected situation of child abuse or neglect in South Carolina.

### We provide a continuum of care.

Family changes everything in a child’s life, so we address the welfare of children not as a singular event, but as a comprehensive, ongoing cycle of services and support designed to help children and families.

**Foster Care** – We help place children who have no relatives to care for them with loving families who can provide the security and shelter of a stable home.

**Residential Care** – We provide a safe family-like setting where children can recover from trauma and disruptions while their family copes with a crisis.

**Child Development Services** – We provide nurturing care and educational support to children, including pregnant and teen moms, to support healthy futures for kids.

**Academic Services** – We provide essential education support that addresses distinct learning gaps and provides personalized learning for children and families.

**Family Engagement** – We offer several highly-personalized programs to teach parents important skills and coping tools that help them build a stable family and strengthen it over time through love and support.

**Transitional Living Services** – We help young people on the verge of adulthood adjust to an independent life outside the foster care system with housing, life skills education, and workforce preparedness resources.



### We rely on a community of support.

Thornwell could not do what we do without a greater community of child welfare advocates, including staff, volunteers, generous donors, and foster families across the states in which we operate. **Contact us to find out how you can be part of our community of support.**

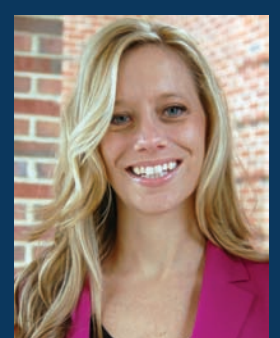
### When families heal, our communities heal.

Together, let’s unite to strengthen families and build up the community of Laurens County.

- Donate** Click 'Donate' at Thornwell.org to make a difference today!
- Tour** Contact us to schedule a campus tour and learn how you can be part of our community of support.
- Volunteer** Contact us to learn how you and your group can serve.
- Join Us** Follow us on social media to receive the latest ministry updates and to learn about upcoming classes and events!

**Jill Gibson**  
Vice President  
for Mission Advancement

864.938.2739  
Jill.Gibson@thornwell.org



Thornwell.org

