

Neighbors



The Clinton Chronicle's 2011

Citizens of the Year are Ron and Nancy Dove

Page 2



Page 10: H.D. Payne was founded in 1932 as a partnership between the older Payne and M.S. Bailey, with Bailey as a silent partner and Payne the one who ran the business day-to-day. In the early 1940s, -- Photo by Bristow Marchant



Inside

- 2 :: Ron & Nancy Dove -- Citizens of the Year
- 3 :: John Carter -- Mayor of Gray Court
- 3 :: Tony Dempsey -- Dempsey's Pizza
- 4 :: Betty Ann Walsh -- Laurens County Clerk
- 5 :: Cindy Burke -- Laurens County Treasurer
- 6 :: Cindy Strange -- Laurens County Water and Sewer Comm.
- 7 :: David Satterfield -- Laurens County Assessor
- 8 :: Doug Hendrick -- Streamer's Cafe
- 9 :: Emil Finley -- WLBG
- 10 :: Horace Payne --H.D. Payne
- 10 :: Sharon O'Bryant -- PRTC
- 11 :: Andy Howard -- Laurens County Parks, Rec., Tourism
- 12 :: Kaye Fridy -- Laurens County Probate Judge
- 12 :: Rhonda Cruickshanks -- WPCC

Advertisers

- 2 :: City of Clinton
- 4 :: Gray Court; City of Laurens Parks & Recreation
- 5 :: Matt Davis State Farm
- 6 :: The Clinton Museum
- 7 :: Aaron Industries; CNGA
- 8 :: Laurens County
- 9 :: Epting Turf & Tractor
- 11 :: Ceramtec
- 13 :: PRTC; Laurens County Health Care System
- 14 :: at&t

Ron & Nancy Dove: Citizens of the Year

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Since Ron and Nancy Dove moved to Clinton 12 years ago to retire, they've done anything but.

Whether it's helping out at church, in school or most often at the United Ministries food pantry on Academy Street, the Doves have done more than enough to earn the title of Citizens of the Year. Just don't try to tell them that.

"We're undeserving, really," Ron said on being told he and his wife had won the honor for 2011. "I know a lot of people in our community who spend a lot of time doing very good things. What we do is probably very small compared to what a good many people in our community do. That's what makes our community such a neat community, I think."

When the retired teachers came to Clinton from the home in Maryland where they raised four children, they wanted to get out of education (at least full time), but they still wanted to find a way to help out in their new community. That's how they got involved with United Ministries.

"Someone at church asked us if we could help, and at the time there wasn't a food pantry. We were just giving vouchers to Ingles for people who needed it," Ron said. "Then the fellow in charge of it, Stewart Peet, asked me if I'd enjoy doing the food pantry and I said sure, because I thought since I was retired that would give me and my wife something to do together."

Ron is the volunteer coordinator of the food pantry, the man in charge of stocking the food packages which are currently distributed to 400 households a month. Nancy has no formal title



The next generation: Ron and Nancy Dove recently led a group of high school students in packing food for needy families. Since moving to Clinton 12 years ago to retire, the Doves have done anything but. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

(except, Ron points out, that of "wife"), but she does work behind the scenes with the donations that come into United Ministries.

"She helps out an enormous amount," Ron said. "On collection days, we have a mini-store back here and she's in charge of that."

"I just try to keep everything organized," Nancy said, "Make sure everything's in the right places so we know where things are. I'm a stocker."

Ron points out that his wife has one important job at the pantry he isn't involved in.

"She writes 'thank you' notes for everybody who brings anything in," Ron said.

But the people who donate items at the pantry don't always make that an easy task.

"We have some people who just say 'this is in the name of

Jesus Christ' and leave all kinds of things and we don't know who to write," Nancy said.

"Most of the time we're able to find out who brought it in and write them a thank you," Ron said. "Because without them we couldn't exist."

The Doves' work with the food bank is part of what earned them the nomination for Citizen of the Year.

"Ron and Nancy Dove have tirelessly and effectively handled the day-to-day operations of this volunteer ministry," said Judy Bailey, a United Ministries volunteer who nominated the Doves along with her husband Melvin.

"Several times a week Ron makes the trip to Harvest Hope in Greenville to pickup the USDA food and also to purchase food. Someone said every time they see Ron and Nancy they are

in the grocery store pushing a cart with food for the food bank."

United Ministries is just one way the Doves get involved in their community. Ron works three days a week teaching a GED course through District 56, and also tutors high school students who need a little extra help.

Nancy often visits the elderly in area nursing homes and through the Meals on Wheels program. She serves on the Senior Options board and volunteers with hospice patients.

They both serve on the church outreach committee at First Presbyterian Church in Clinton, and in summer they get up at 4 a.m. to make breakfast for a church camp program.

It sounds like an active schedule for a retired couple, but Ron seems unfazed by all the ac-



Civic pride: Nancy and Ron Dove are Citizens of the Year for their work with the United Ministries Food Bank on Academy Street, where they help feed 400 families a month. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

tivities he's involved in.

"Doesn't everybody do stuff like that?" he asks. "I think so."

Both Doves originally come from the Midwest. Nancy was born in Ohio to an educator who later moved with his family to Tennessee. Ron grew up in western Pennsylvania, where he experienced the kind of hardscrabble life he now sees at United Ministries firsthand.

"My dad worked at a furniture store and at a funeral home, just plain labor work," he said. "Neither one of our families came from any rich family, in fact far from it. We never thought about how poor we really were. I thought everybody got their jeans from their older brother."

Ron also inherited his zest for volunteer work from his father, who for many years served as the chief of the local volunteer fire station.

The two eventually met in math class at Milligan College, a small liberal arts school in eastern Tennessee, where both graduated with degrees in mathematics. Ron later went on to get

his Ed.S. in math from the University of Arkansas and became a teacher in western New York and Maryland, where Nancy also taught until the birth of her second child.

"One of our kids was born in New York, one was born in Arkansas, and two were born in Maryland," Ron said.

Even after the birth of her own children, Nancy continued to be active in education.

"I did home and hospital teaching for 16 years for kids who are either sick or injured," she said.

The Doves also went above and beyond to care for children outside the classroom, opening their home to dozens of foster children over the years. Even after they moved to Clinton, for a number of years they acted as house parents at Thornwell Children's Home and taught at the Thornwell school.

"We had kids in foster care and at Thornwell who no one had ever asked them if they had any homework," Nancy said.

Doves, Page 13

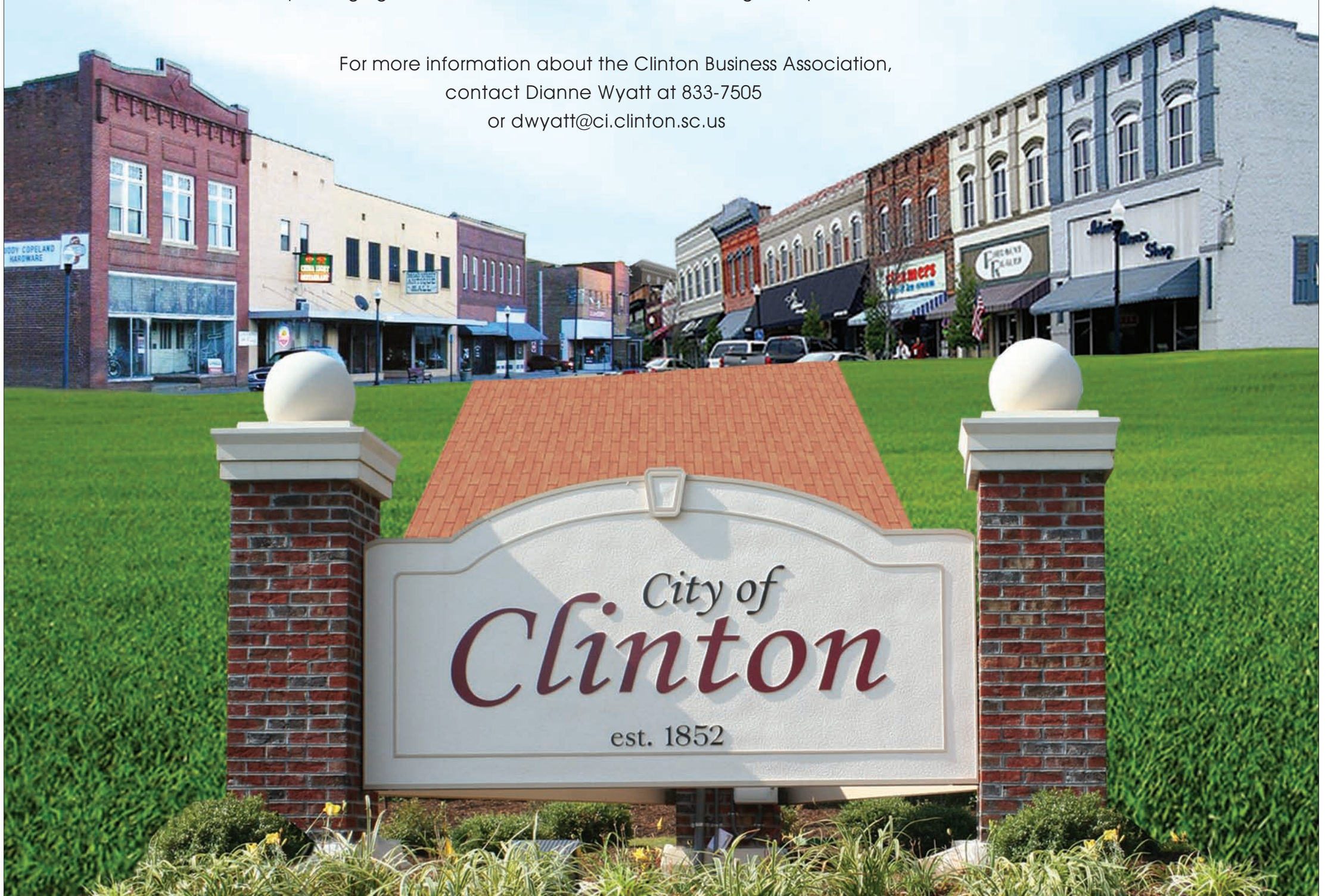
The City of Clinton

Clinton is a special place where you will find involved citizens, friendly neighborhoods and a high quality of life. The proud home of Presbyterian College, our city is nestled in the heart of Upstate South Carolina. Clinton's commitment to citizen driven strategic planning has resulted in a vibrant, enthusiastic community focused on enhancing all aspects of our hometown. Whether you are a football fanatic, history buff, or are simply looking for a wonderful place to raise your children, the City of Clinton has it all.

Downtown Clinton Events Include:

Town Rhythms, Celebrate Clinton, Clinton Fall Festival, PC Freshman Block Party, Downtown Arts Show, Clinton's Got Talent, Children's Fun Fest, Gospel Singing, Easter Events for Families, Christmas Lights, Open House, Christmas Parade

For more information about the Clinton Business Association, contact Dianne Wyatt at 833-7505 or dwyatt@ci.clinton.sc.us



John Carter: Mayor of Gray Court

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

John Carter has lived in Gray Court for all but seven years of his life. In that time, he's gone from being the son of a sharecropper in the segregated South to being elected six times as the town's mayor.

"The only time I was away (was) after high school, when I migrated to Brooklyn, N.Y.," he said. "Then I gave up on making that first million and came back to Gray Court to start all over."

Carter grew up on a small farm in Gray Court where his parents worked. As a child, going to school meant a trek of several miles by road. The school offered a bus service at the cost of 25 cents a week, but of the four cousins living in his house at the time, Carter's parents could only afford a bus seat for one.

As the youngest child, some of Carter's earliest memories are of looking out the bus window as he passed his older cousins walking to school, having left the house on foot before his day began and reaching their final destination after he had arrived.

"That's something I'll never forget," the mayor says today.

Today, Gray Court is a much different place than the town he grew up in, partly because of Carter himself. As mayor, he's seen the primary school he attended converted into a community center, and he worked to acquire the farmland his parents once worked and turn it into a town park.

When Carter was in 10th grade at Sanders High School in Laurens, his father left farming and took a job as a construction worker.

"My dad took a job with Daniel Construction Company



Mister Mayor: Gray Court Mayor John Carter talks to a constituent outside Gray Court Town Hall. Carter has seen the town change since he grew up as the son of sharecroppers on a farm that is now a town park. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

making a dollar an hour," Carter said. "They were working on that building where Milliken is in Laurens. That building started out being a carpet company years ago. After that my dad went to work for the school system. My mother had done domestic work, then she went to work for the school system."

When he graduated from Sanders in 1959, Carter left South Carolina for several years to try to make a life for himself in New York City, but eventually found his way back to Gray Court in 1966.

"Industry had started to boom around here," he said. "Homes down here were much cheaper. I could get a mortgage for less than what I paid for a three-room apartment in Brooklyn. And as I got older the big-city life just didn't appeal to me as much as when I was younger.

So I decided to come back home, and I hadn't been here a week when I got a job, and I've been working ever since."

He went to work as a material handler and kiln-tender at the 3M plant in Laurens, but after a little more than a year on the job, the company underwent a reduction in force, and Carter found himself laid off and in need of money.

"They were working on the road between Laurens and Clinton, so I took the old road to Clinton to sign up for unemployment," he said. "I passed a great big building on my right and it was the Torrington Company. I had heard so much about Torrington, Torrington. My brother lived in Connecticut and there was a Torrington in Connecticut. So on the way back from the unemployment office I put in an application up there."

His chance encounter with Torrington proved to be a stroke of good luck.

"That was on a Tuesday, and they were impressed with me," Carter said. "They started me to work that Friday, so I never drew an unemployment check."

Carter worked at Torrington for two years grinding roller bearings six days a week. But then in 1969, Carter decided he wanted his life to take a different direction. He wanted to get involved in community activism, partly because of an encounter with a famous politician up north.

"While I was in New York, Robert Kennedy came around to the area where I lived, and I started to take a liking to politics," Carter said.

Once he was back in South Carolina, he thought back to the issues that mattered to him



Seat of honor: Mayor John Carter sits in his chair in the Gray Court town council chambers. Carter has been involved in town government for 35 years. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

growing up in Gray Court.

"When I was a kid I used to deliver newspapers, and I read a lot about how the NAACP was breaking down barriers of segregation, and I made myself a promise that when I got to be a grown person I was going to be a registered voter and a member and supporter of the NAACP."

In 1950s South Carolina, these were not minor commitments.

He took a job with the Laurens County Community Action Agency, and organized community meetings where local people could voice their concerns. He also attended state meetings of the NAACP, where he heard stories about organizing in other parts of South Carolina and applied those lessons to his own community.

He started attending meetings of Gray Court Town Council, something he looks back on now sitting in a small confer-

ence room in town hall.

"The first council meeting I came to was in this room," he said. "The mayor was over here and there were five chairs over there, and if anybody else came they had to stand up."

Carter's first major concern was that the town put up street signs in residential neighborhoods to slow down traffic in areas where children were playing.

"They told us they didn't get involved in that kind of stuff, but if we wanted to raise the money ourselves, they would help us put the signs up," he remembers. "One of the council members, I never will forget him, pulled out his checkbook and gave us a donation to help us buy the signs."

After a few years involved in community issues, a seat on the town council came open and

Carter, Page 11

Tony Dempsey: Dempsey's Pizza

By Jamie Burns
Horizons 2011

Dempsey's Pizza owner Tony Dempsey first got into the restaurant business as a dishwasher at Pizza Inn, and he said he isn't above doing it now.

"It's all about the way you treat your employees," he said. "I'm not the type of person to sit back and watch everybody else do the work. When I come in, I'm here to work, just like everybody else. That's how we're able to keep good workers, because they're treated no differently than anybody else."

Dempsey was just 15 years old when he started working in the pizza industry. He had no idea it would become his lifelong career.

"It was just a job," he said. "I worked there all through high school, but I really didn't know what I wanted to do for the rest of my life."

After spending a year away at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, the Spartanburg native came home and transferred to USC Upstate.

"After being away from it for a year, I thought 'well, that wasn't so bad after all,'" Dempsey said.

He went back to work at Pizza Inn, helping some with the Union location, too.

In 1980, he went to work for Robert Manning at Pizza Inn in Anderson, where he first got into restaurant management. Dempsey soon became the area supervisor for Pizza Inns in Clinton, Greenwood, Anderson, Easley and Greenville.

Dempsey purchased the Pizza Inn in Clinton, which was located in the building that now houses Rick and Tammy's Barbershop, from Frank Whiteford in 1981.

"I knew the Clinton location seemed to do better than other locations," he said. "A lot of the other restaurants I supervised



Happy helpers: They key to running a successful business is treating all employees with respect, said Dempsey's Pizza owner Tony Dempsey. He said he is able to keep good workers by treating them fairly and by never asking them to do anything he would not do himself. - Photo by Jamie Burns

were newer and there were more overhead costs, so Clinton appeared to be making the most money, and it just seemed like the best decision."

Dempsey built a new location, now Dempsey's Pizza, in 1988. It remained a Pizza Inn for more than 20 years before he decided to branch out on his own.

"I had been with Pizza Inn for a while, and I was having to pay a lot of money in royalties and things like that, and I thought I could make more money going out on my own," he said. "I had to pay those fees no matter how much our store was making, so it just made more sense for me to start my own restaurant and get away from paying them."

Dempsey said the small town atmosphere has helped his business thrive since getting away from the Pizza Inn label.

"In a big city, labels would probably mean a lot more. I don't think a restaurant like (Dempsey's Pizza) would do as well as it has if I was in a big city," he said, "but in a small town like Clinton, once you've

established a reputation in the community, people are going to come to Tony's place. They're going to support the people they know and have established friendships with."

In addition to forming close, personal relationships with his clientele, Dempsey said there are two things he does to keep his customers coming back: keep the restaurant clean and the prices reasonable.

Cleaning is the easy part, he said. Consistent pricing is one of his biggest challenges.

"You don't want the prices to go up on the food you're selling, but the price of the things we use to make the pizza change," he said. "Like beef and sausage and meats we use, those prices don't really ever go down."

Dempsey said he learned to make pizza from scratch while working at Pizza Inn, so even after the company went to pre-made dough and sauces, he was able to take what he'd learned and use it to make pizza in his own restaurant.

"The work really didn't

change after I went out on my own," he said. "I'm basically doing the same things I was doing before, just with a different name."

And even after decades in the pizza industry, Dempsey said his customers keep his work interesting and unpredictable.

"People ask me all the time, 'Don't you get tired of doing the same thing every day?'" he said. "But it's really not the same. I see different customers every day and interact with all kinds of people on a daily basis. Some customers might come in once a week, but I still don't see them every day, and I never know who I am going to run into that day when I come into work."

Dempsey did temporarily lease the business out to someone else a couple of years ago, but since he returned as the owner in January 2010, he said he has had no desire to leave the pizza industry.

"It gave me a chance to get away for a while, but I don't think I'll do it again," he said.

Dempsey said he enjoys



Endless pizza: Tony Dempsey, above, has been working in the pizza industry since he was a teenager. He had not planned on making a lifelong career of it, but after spending time away at the University of South Carolina, Dempsey said he decided it was not so bad after all and was ready to return. He worked for Pizza Inn for more than 20 years before opening Dempsey's Pizza in Clinton. - Photo by Jamie Burns

working and has always been the type to keep busy. Even during the 18 months he was away from his restaurant business, he said he started a lawn care business and worked part-time at Ingles.

"I did several different things, just working odd jobs here and there," he said. "I never really quit working."

But he has cut back. Before he left Dempsey's Pizza in 2008, he said he usually worked anywhere from 65-70 hours in a week. Since he returned last year, he's down to around 50 hours, due in part to help from his son, Paul.

"I'd talked to him before about taking over here, but he wanted to do something else," he said, "but now he's decided it's really not so bad, so he has stepped in and its really made this a family operation."

Dempsey said his family has actually been instrumental in the restaurant's success all along. His other two children, Meshay

and Cory, both worked in the restaurant as teenagers and his wife, Bert, still spends a lot of her time there.

Even though he has passed on some of the management responsibility to his son, Dempsey doubts he'll ever step away from the business completely.

"I'll probably always be here in some, but I'm looking forward to being able to come and go as I please," he said. "People don't think owning a restaurant is hard, but it is. It's a lot of work, and a lot of times, it's 24/7."

He's not sure when he'll semi-retire, but when he does, he plans to spend the rest of his time with his family.

"I'm just looking forward to quality family time," he said. "No major plans. I just want to spend time with my family now. I have a grandchild now, so I want to spend time with her and watch her grow up."

Betty Ann Walsh: County clerk

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Betty Ann Walsh doesn't hold the most prominent position in county government, but for the day-to-day operations of Laurens County, hers may be the most important.

As the county clerk, Walsh works with county council, the county administrator, all the different departments of county government and members of the public to ensure all county business is dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

"It's kind of a liaison between the departments and the public with council, and the public with the department heads. It's really a wide variety," she said. "To say exactly what I do would be hard to put on paper. You'd have to follow me from day to day to really see."

On a recent day, Walsh dealt with two representative issues back-to-back. A resident came to the county offices on Church Street in Laurens with a probate claim for a deceased relative's property — in this case, a handgun stored away in a plastic bag, which Walsh retrieved for him.

Moments later, Walsh was on the phone with a cable company, ensuring that when newly-elected Congressman Jeff Duncan opened a local office in the county courthouse, it would have access to congressional proceedings on C-SPAN.

Those two items on a crowded daily schedule are indicative of the range of activities the county clerk undertakes on behalf of the county, not including the various council and board meetings each month which Walsh organizes.

"There's just a lot of coordination with that, pulling in all



Public servant: County Clerk Betty Ann Walsh juggles government services and public relations from her office at Laurens County's Church Street office complex. "To say exactly what I do would be hard to put on paper," she said. "You'd have to follow me from day to day to really see." — Photo by Bristow Marchant

sources, documents, ordinances," she said. "(I) write the resolutions when they're proposed or requested. Even with council committees, I have to coordinate with getting those agendas together and getting them out."

Walsh has served as clerk since 1991, capping a long period of activity in Laurens County both in and out of the public arena.

Growing up in Laurens, Walsh's father ran Crews Texaco station on East Main Street. When her mother passed away when Walsh was still a child, she took over the bookkeeping and collections for her father's business at the age of 15.

After she got out of school, she married J.D. Walsh and worked in the kindergarten program at First Baptist Church, before she took a job with the Chamber of Commerce in 1985.

At that point, the Clinton and Laurens chambers had merged into a single Laurens County Chamber, but it was still split between offices in Clinton and Laurens. Walsh started work in the Laurens office.

"I worked there through the consolidation into one office," she said. "I started out as a receptionist and went through members' service coordinator."

She left the Chamber in 1989 when her husband's job with Torrington moved him to the Atlanta area, and Walsh had to pick up sticks for a couple of years.

"I was offered a job with a major real estate brokerage down there, but I didn't want to travel all the way across Atlanta every day," Walsh said. "So I researched to try and find some closer jobs. I became the director of a KinderCare (Learning Center) down there."

Even while she was in Atlanta, Walsh kept in touch with Laurens County. She continued to serve as membership treasurer for the 100 Club while she was away.

The Walshes moved back to Laurens County two years later, and she worked for a time with the Joe Gresham real estate company before she started looking at jobs with the county.

"I applied for another job with Scott Holland in Public Works and (in) Voter Registration," she said. "What they ended up doing was they combined those two positions, and I worked part of the week with registration and part with Public Works."

Within the year, Walsh was appointed by county council to the clerk's position, putting her at the heart of county government.

"I really enjoy the political



Keeping things going: As the county clerk, Walsh works with county council, the county administrator, all the different departments of county government and members of the public to ensure all county business is dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible. -- Photo by Bristow Marchant

arena," she said, "and the job has really grown since I started working here."

As well as her position working with county council, the clerk has additional duties in a number of other county offices.

"Presently, I work with the Planning Commission. I'm on board with the Main Street Laurens program. I assist the assessor with tax grievance hearings. I work with the Parks and Recreation director, the accommodations tax allocations, the development corporation, I assist Billy (Wilson) with purchasing and vehicle maintenance."

Like her first job with the Chamber of Commerce, Walsh continues to serve as a sort of receptionist for the rest of the county's administrative office, taking calls and handling situations for anyone who might be


out of the office. She even handled payroll and accounts payable when the regular clerk was out sick.

"I usually don't leave here until about 6, 6:30 p.m.," she said. "I've been as late as 9:30 getting home."

"She's the one who really runs the county," said County Treasurer Cindy Burke. "She's who you go to get things done. We had the opportunity to entertain the head of the Department of Revenue, and she sent out invitations all over the state, she got the media involved."

"She's been here about as long as I have," said County Administrator Ernie Segars, who's worked for the county for 23 years. "We have a great working relationship. She's re-




Walsh, Page 5









Gray Court

SOUTH CAROLINA

Gray Court is nestled in the northwest corner of Laurens County. Originally named Dorroh or Dorrohville in honor of a local family, the name was changed to Gray Court on October 17, 1899, and the new town was charted three days later. Gray Court has a population of 1,021 residents.

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

Come Grow With Us



City of Laurens Parks & Recreation

Youth Sports and Activities



City of Laurens Parks and Recreation Offering Little League Baseball and Softball, Youth Tackle Football and Cheerleading, Youth Basketball, Fall Baseball, plus a full summer of camps and activities

Enjoy Our Many Parks



Laurens offers many different parks for your enjoyment: Little River Park, Laurens City Park and Riverstreet Park. Birthday Parties can be reserved for Little River Park

Community Festivals



Community Festivals such as Boo in the Park, Riverfront Freedom Festival, Little River Spring Festival and Little River Wonderland.

Concerts



Home of Laurens Idol and the Summer Concert Series.

For information regarding any or all activities please email laurensprd@yahoo.com or call 864-681-7275.



Cindy Burke: County treasurer

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

When the former county treasurer hired Cindy Burke to work in his office, he attracted her to the job with a statement that turned out to be prophetic.

"(The late) Allen Coleman hired me while I was working at Palmetto Bank," Burke remembers. "He said, 'come work for me, and you could be treasurer someday.' I thought he was joking."

Ten years later, when Coleman's successor Cecil Garrett passed away in the middle of his term, Burke found herself appointed to the job she didn't think she could get a decade earlier. In 1998, she was elected to a full term of her own, and last November she was re-elected to a fourth consecutive term as Laurens County treasurer.

It was an unexpected turn for the former bank teller turned clerk. She had to polish up her accounting credentials before the top job came her way.

"Mr. Garrett had indicated he might want me to succeed him, so I went back to USC here in Laurens, in Union and in Spartanburg," she said. "You need to have a good strong background in accounting."

Burke was born in Asheville and moved to Laurens with the rest of her family in 1970, when her father got a job at B.F. Shaw. After graduating from Laurens District 55 High School, she got a job at Palmetto Bank, where one of her regular customers was Coleman, father of current Laurens County Council Chairman Jim Coleman.

"I was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time," she said.

She came to the treasurer's office in 1986, and worked her way up from clerk ("it was sim-



Clerks: In the Treasurer's Office, you will find, from left, Brandy Teague, Reba Babb, Treasurer Cindy Burke, Donna Waldrop and Jackie Sullivan. Burke credits her staff with handling most of the problems of her constituents. "Most people who come in here don't see me, they see them," she said. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

ilar to what I was doing as a cashier and a teller") to delinquent tax collector to deputy treasurer a few years before her interim appointment to her current position.

As treasurer, Burke's job is to manage Laurens County taxpayers' money and to oversee tax collection.

She not only manages money for the county government. She also invests money for school districts 55 and 56, sections of Greenville and Greenwood county school districts that cover Laurens County, and other local agencies.

"Only about 30 percent of it is the county's money," she said.

Burke currently has about \$17 million invested in CDs and local government bonds.

"There are certain limitations on what we can invest in," she said. "Now, we have to be more creative with our investments, because they're not making what they did."

Burke wrote Laurens County's current investment policy herself, matching it up with the state's investment policy and incorporating advice she's received in talks with other county treasurers. Her most important guideline, she says, is safeguarding the taxpayer's money.

"If a broker calls me from California, he may not know South Carolina law. He needs to know what the guidelines are, read them and agree to them or else I can't do business with him," she said. "That protects the taxpayer. This is an elected position, so my bosses are the taxpayers."

With state revenues as tight as they are, Burke's current investments are primed to give Laurens County the most cash on hand.

"One thing I've found with all these cuts is that you must be liquid," she said, "so there are not a lot of high-yield invest-

ments. You have to be prepared, because a tornado could come through the county and really lower values."

When Burke moved into her current office at Hillcrest Square in Laurens 10 years ago, she was able to add one of the features she's most proud of, and one that is most popular with her bosses the taxpayers; a drive-through window.

"That made a lot of people very happy, not to have to make that long walk down the hallway, especially if they can't walk that far," Burke said. "Now they don't have to get out of their cars."

When the treasurer's office was moved to Hillcrest Square along with many other county offices, she specifically requested the drive-through option and worked to put it in place.

"Money was limited, but that was one thing I wanted," she said. "It was costly. It was not cheap. When I requested it, we didn't have the staff to work it... Some people are still finding out it's here."

Burke is also proud that her office was one of the first treasurer's offices in the Upstate to accept credit and debit card payments, and even allows payments to be made online, for a



Treasure keeper: Cindy Burke is in her fourth full term as Laurens County Treasurer. She was appointed to the job in 1996 when treasurer Cecil Garrett died in office. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

fee.

Today, the treasurer's office includes eight full-time employees plus seasonal workers.

"Most people who come in here don't see me, they see them," Burke said. "I have a wonderful staff. They're really quality people who care about their jobs."

In her next term, Burke wants to work more closely with the Department of Motor Vehicles. The treasurer's office already offers decals for DMV registration, and she hopes in the future to combine more services to provide better service to the taxpayers.

In her role as president of the South Carolina Association of Auditors, Treasurers and Tax Collectors (SCATT), Burke worked with DMV director Marcia Adams on the redesigned South Carolina license plates.

"At one time, the DMV had a strained relationship with the county," Burke said. "Now I want to work more closely with the DMV so we can accept more late fees."

Burke served as president of SCATT from 2007 to 2008, where she again followed in the footsteps of Coleman, the man who hired her in the first place.

Burke is only the second official from Laurens County to serve in the post.

Burke says she owes a lot to the leadership of Coleman and Garrett before taking on the post of treasurer herself.

"They were both excellent treasurers who taught me a lot," she said.

She's also served as the 2009-10 president of the South Carolina Association of Assessing Officials, an association that studies tax assessment issues, the first treasurer to serve in that position.

Today, Burke continues to live in Laurens with her husband Ed Burke. The couple has two stepchildren, Shannon Burke and Christie MacTaggart.

In nearly a quarter century of working in the treasurer's office, Burke has seen things change for the better, and hopes to keep the office moving forward while she's in charge.

"I'm proud of the fact that we provide a lot of services," she said. "I've seen it grow. When I started here, we had no computers. You had to go pull out the files and stamp it. Now it's really streamlined things for the taxpayers, so we can do a lot of good."



L-R, Back Row: David Tribble, Ronna Nabors, Will Owens; L-R, Front Row: Matt Davis, Tammy Fortson, Angel Wilson



Quick service: Cindy Burke moved her office to its present location at Hillcrest Square, where she took advantage of an old bank teller's window to start a drive-through service for constituents to make payments and drop off fees. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

Walsh

From Page 4

ally more than a clerk. She's an administrator who can make the right decision, give the right information and provide excellent support."

As much work as the clerk's job seems to involve, Walsh said advances in technology have made the job easier than it was 20 years ago, when she was armed with only a typewriter.

"I'm just thankful council has evolved to the point we are now with computers and whatnot," she said. "Like with the recent snow day, Ernie would

call me with what we were doing, and either by e-mail or telephone I got the word out, where it used to be I had to call each department head."

Phone-line connections have also improved over the years.

"It's got a lot of automated points with it," Walsh said. "With this system, we've got four-digit dialing where we can go to Hillcrest (Judicial Center) or the Sheriff's Department or the courthouse instead of calling their regular lines and tying them up."

Walsh raised her children Lisa and Ed at the same time

she dedicated herself to public service, thanks, she says, to the people who mentored her; Richard Pillsbury, who worked with her in the Leadership Laurens County Group while she worked at the Chamber of Commerce, and Sarah Cronic, who actively served with the Chamber and other community boards and organizations.

"It's always been a learning process," she said. "I've been fortunate to work for agencies and individuals who whether I realized it or not were mentors for me."

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

Call or stop by for your free rate quote today!

864-833-5036



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

Providing Insurance & Financial Services



STATE FARM

statefarm.com®

Cindy Strange: LCWSC

By Jamie Burns
Horizons 2011

Strange isn't just the last name of the Information Services Manager for the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission. It's also the adjective Cindy Strange said friends and family use to describe the obsession she developed with water towers after coming to work for the LCWSC.

"I never noticed them before I came to work here, but I've just become fascinated with them," she said. "My kids will point them out to me now and say, 'look at that water tower, mom,' and I'll have to stop and get out of the car and take pictures. I know it's weird, but there are some beautiful towers out there."

When a new tower was built in Laurens in 2009, Strange liked it so much she began personifying it.

"I named her Eleanor," she said. "I decided she was a girl because she was just so beautiful."

During construction of the tower, Strange was responsible for overseeing operations. She said she spent most afternoons on site filming and taking photographs and dreaming of climbing the 120-foot tower once it was complete.

"It was just always a dream of mine," she said. "I'd been a part of it from the first brick, and it was something I wanted to do."

Despite her extreme fear of heights-she said she can't even step out onto a fifth floor balcony of a hotel without getting nervous-her dream of climbing the tower came true last year, and she said she'd do it again if she could.

"It was the best day ever," she said. "Seriously, it was just so awesome. It was the greatest feeling. Coming down was a lot harder than coming up, but it really wasn't that bad because I was so excited. There wasn't water in it at the time, so I even got to go inside the tank."

Strange said one of her goals is to eventually climb a lake tank with a ladder that is located on the outside of the tank, rather than the one she climbed with an inside ladder.

Before coming to work for the LCWSC five years ago, Strange said she would have never attempted something so risky.



Sky high: In 2009, Cindy Strange of the LCWSC fulfilled her dream of climbing the 120-foot water tower she calls Eleanor. She called it one of the best days of her life and, despite her fear of heights, said she hopes to climb other water towers in the future.

- Photo courtesy of Cindy Strange

"The craziest thing I'd ever done was the bungee jump thing at Carowinds," she said.

Strange, whose work has sent her to Dallas, Chicago and other major cities around the country, said there was a time in her life when she wouldn't even travel further than a couple of blocks from home if she was alone.

Growing up in a small rural community in Virginia, Strange said she guessed she never became comfortable driving in larger cities because she just wasn't exposed to them when she was younger.

After graduating from high school in Richlands, Va., Strange took a job as a receptionist at a doctor's office while taking classes at a local college to become a certified nursing assistant.

She continued to work in the medical field for six years before she decided it wasn't the right line of work for her.

In 1992, Strange gave up her job as a CNA to work in telecommunications at a small private college in Bluefield, Virginia, where she initially discovered the career field she said is perfect for her.

She spent much of her time traveling back and forth to Dallas to receive training at a telecommunications school. After taking several cross country flights and staying in the city alone, Strange finally

gained the confidence to move away from her hometown.

"I just wanted a change," she said. "I'd lived in the same town my whole life, and I just wanted to go somewhere different."

Strange took a job in operations at MCI in Greenville, where she was in charge of an 850-seat call center.

Through a mutual friend in Greenville, Strange was introduced to her now-husband, Laurens County native Matt Strange, who she dated for five years before marrying in November 2001.

She knew she wanted children, so the self-proclaimed obsessive organizer said she started planning right away.

"I wasn't exactly a spring chicken. I was already in my 30s, so I thought 'Okay, we can spend this much time as a married couple before we have kids, and clothes aren't that cute in the winter anyway, so I'll get pregnant then and have kids in the spring because spring birthday parties will be fun,'" she said. "That's how crazy I can get sometimes."

And everything went according to plan-almost. Strange did find out she was pregnant in the winter and the due date was scheduled for spring, but what she hadn't prepared for was twins.

"My mom kept telling me I could have twins," she said,

"and I'd tell her the Lord won't give me more than I can handle, and then I wound up having twins."

Strange's only children, Wyatt and Mattison, were born in April 2004. She refers to the boy-girl combo as the "total package."

Before her children were born, Strange said she spent most of her time riding and grooming horses, something she has loved to do since she was young, but now, she said spending time with her family is her favorite thing to do.

"I'm really kind of a homebody," she said. "I like being at home. I hear about the places other people travel, and I'm sure it's nice, but I really just don't have any desire to leave the country at all."



Career woman: Before coming to work for the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission, Information Services Manager Cindy Strange spent several years working as a CNA before deciding on a career in telecommunications. She describes her position at the LCWSC as the perfect job for her.

- Photo by Jamie Burns

In addition to being a wife and mother and employee of the LCWSC, Strange, who said community involvement has always been a priority for her, is a board member for the YMCA, Touchdown Club, Crime Stoppers, Chamber of Commerce events committee and the Laurens County committee for the March of Dimes.

"Giving back to the community is a top priority for me. It always has been," she said. "Plus I can't say no. If I'm asked to serve on something and I think I can contribute positively in anyway, I'm going to do it. That's just the kind of person I am."

Strange said she hopes to instill the same level of compassion in her children, who are now six years old.

"I want to teach them they have too much. Like most of us, they're a little spoiled," she said. "I want them to volunteer at a soup kitchen on Thanksgiving, or I want them to pick out some of their toys to give to the less fortunate. Those are the types of things I want to start doing with my children when they're old enough to understand."

Above everything else, Strange said God comes first in her life and her ultimate goal is to raise her children the same way.

"My children are in church every Sunday," she said. "God comes first, always. That's really important to me in any decision I make."

Collect, Conserve, Communicate and Celebrate.



THE
Clinton MUSEUM

400 North Broad Street, Clinton, SC 29325
864-938-1099

Sunday, 2pm-5pm
Tuesday & Thursday, 1pm-4pm
Special Tours By Appointment
Free Admission



Happy family: Cindy Strange calls herself an obsessive organizer who has to plan every detail ahead of time, but she said the only plan she has for the near future is to spend a lot of quality time with her family. "I'm really kind of a homebody," she said. Above, Strange poses with husband, Matt, and their children, Wyatt and Mattison. - Photo courtesy of Cindy Strange

David Satterfield: County assessor

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

On Jan. 1 this year, David Satterfield took over from the long-serving Jerry Robertson as the Laurens County tax assessor. In taking over as the new top man in assessment, Satterfield caps a long, winding career that included stop in government and textiles, making him an ex-Marine, building inspector and HVAC technician.

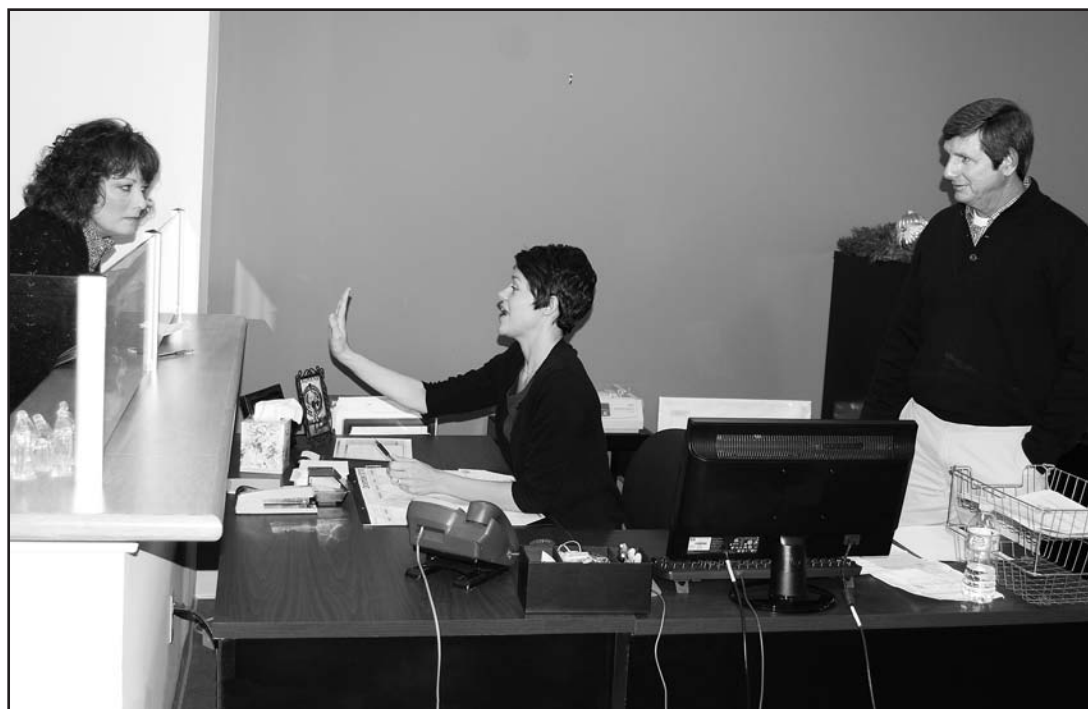
Before taking his current job, he served as Robertson's deputy assessor for seven years, and worked for 14 years total in Laurens County government. Before that, he spent 13 years working for CMI Industries in his home town of Clinton.

"I went from the plant working seven days a week to working five days a week here," Satterfield said. "It was almost like getting a vacation every week. But once you get used to that, the thought process changes and the weekends aren't long enough."

Growing up, Satterfield's father worked also worked for Clinton Mills, and his mother worked at Torrington. But after he graduated from high school, Satterfield's sights were set over the horizon.

"I had a friend who was in the Marine Corps," he said. "He came home from boot camp, and he was headed out to California, and I was born and raised in Clinton and hardly ever left, so that sounded good to me."

He signed up for the corps, but he didn't get to stay in California after basic training. Instead, he spent most of the next four years stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C., except for nine months spent at sea as part of a NATO training exercise.



Assessment in progress: David Satterfield, after a career in the military and at Clinton Mills, found a third career working in the Laurens County tax assessor's office, and he eventually worked his way up to become assessor last month. — Photo by Bristow Marchant



Good assessment: Clinton native David Satterfield, who served as deputy assessor for Laurens County for seven years, moved into the assessor's office in January. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

"My dad was in the Navy, and I ended up serving more time at sea than he did," Satterfield said. "On the cruise, I went to a lot of interesting places; Egypt, Spain, Italy, Norway, England... I got to see a lot of places I definitely wouldn't have got to see if I hadn't signed up."

When his enlistment was up, Satterfield didn't have to worry about what to do next in life — his father already had plans.

"I got out of the Marine Corps on a Friday, and my dad had me working in the mill on Monday," he said. "That's a true story."

For more than a dozen years, Satterfield serviced refrigeration equipment for Clinton Mills, something that proved vital to the plant's operation.

"Oh yeah, it's hot in a cotton mill, boy."

But in 1996, the plant closed down. Looking for a new line

of work, Satterfield began his second career as a government employee by answering an ad in the paper for a building codes inspector. By chance, the man who hired him for his first government job (or considering his military career, his second) in one department ended up being instrumental in landing him a job in another department.

"That was the year they first started (the inspection) department, and before they got the department up and running, Jerry was pretty much overseeing the assessor's office and that office as well until they got their own department head," Satterfield said. After a year doing building inspections, "the appraiser Wilson Barnes retired, and Jerry asked me if I would be interested in going back to get my certification to be an appraiser, and I told him I would."

"And the rest is history," he said. "I've been here ever since."

In the assessor's office, Satterfield carried over some of the skills he picked up as a building inspector, only now his job was to assess buildings for their taxable value.

"Every five years you have a reassessment year, but you have property every day that need to go on with construction and whatnot," he said. "You have someone with a building permit who wants to build a new home, we measure it, determine the square-footage and put a value on it for tax purposes."

Sometimes, an assessor even has to act as a building inspector. "You have to check the conditions of the homes every five years because some homes could be deteriorating rapidly, and you have to assess the depreciation in your appraisal."

Over the years, Satterfield

has learned a lot from Robertson about running the assessor's office, and plans to continue in his footsteps now that he's taking the place of the man who hired him.

"Jerry's just a real stickler for detail," Satterfield said, "and you have to be because of the state laws we have to follow, you have to make sure you're fair and consistent across the board, making sure that state laws are followed, and just treating people well when they come into your office. And we've done a good job of doing that over the years."

Satterfield and his ex-wife Sandi have two children; his daughter Lauren is studying microbiology at Clemson University, and his son Alex, a senior at Laurens Academy, has accepted a baseball scholarship to the University of South Carolina.

He takes pride in his son's

accomplishment, since he first managed Alex on the Clinton Reds traveling baseball team at 9 years old. In fact, Satterfield credits being a baseball manager with preparing him for the assessor's job.

"Dealing with moms who thought little Johnny should be batting first, working on a shoe-string budget, like here," he says. "And we traveled all over the Southeast, and we accomplished some good things. That taught me if you've got people working together for a common goal, anything can happen."

He says he thought back on that lesson when he found himself in the running to be the new assessor.

"When this job first came open, I was wondering if this was something I wanted to do, something I was prepared to do," Satterfield said. "I just thought back to when we first

Satterfield, Page 8

Aaron Industries, Inc.

28966 Hwy. 76 East
&
1874 Highway 72 West
Clinton, SC 29325

11865 South Alameda Street
Lynwood, CA 90262

(864) 833-0178

**Proud Producers of the Finest
Pharmaceutical and
Food Grade Chemicals**

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.

- Rheem standard and Rinnai tankless water heaters
- Amana, Maytag, Estate and Kitchen Aid ranges and washer/dryers
- Corcho and Vanguard heaters
- Holland and Bubba grills
- Buckstove, Empire, Martin Monessen, Peterson 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

Doug Hendrick: Steamer's Cafe

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Doug Hendrick is working his third career. He was a schoolteacher and worked with insurance companies before he got into the restaurant business. But when Hendrick took over Steamer's restaurant in downtown Clinton last year, in a way, he was getting back to his first job.

"I've always worked in food service," he said. "My first job was with Tony Dempsey (at Dempsey's Pizza) when I was 15. I waited tables through college. It was something I wanted to do. I didn't like my other job."

Hendrick's twisting journey to Steamer's mirrors the way he grew up; he traveled around the country during his stepfather's career in the Air Force, but he eventually found his way back home to Clinton.

After his stepfather Mike Carbonneau got out of the service in 1991, the family moved back to Clinton. Carbonneau became a police officer in Clinton, while Hendrick's mother Susie worked as an office manager in several doctors' offices.

Hendrick graduated from Clinton High School and then attended Clemson University to earn a degree in secondary education (and, as he says, wait tables).

When he graduated in 2005 and received his education certification, Hendrick came back to Clinton to teach at his old high school.

"(I went into teaching for) the same reason that brings everybody into it," he said. "You enjoy working with children, and you have an idealized version of the world, and thought it'd be something I'm good at. And I was good at it."

For two years, he taught social studies at Clinton high and coached the girls' lacrosse team.

"I miss the interactions with students and I miss coaching, coaching was a lot of fun," Hendrick said. "If I could coach full time, that'd be a great job, because you're dealing with kids that want to be there. It's an optional sport. They don't have to be there, they want to be."

But Hendrick eventually became dissatisfied with the job of a schoolteacher ("There's a lot of bureaucracy involved," he said) and once his initial contract was up, decided to look for something else to do.

"I did that for two years and



Family dining: The staff of Steamer's under Doug Hendrick's ownership and management. From left are Amy Lawson, Mike Carbonneau (Hendrick's father), Roberta Lawson, Tina Knight, Hendrick and Kane Carbonneau (Hendrick's brother). Hendrick marked a year in charge of the downtown restaurant in January. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

knew I didn't have 26 more," he said. "If you feel like it's not for you, you keep on going."

After leaving teaching, Hendrick got a job through a family friend as a project manager for a mitigation and restoration company out of Columbia, working with people who lost their homes to fires or other disasters. It was not an area the former teacher was very familiar with, as he told the man who hired him.

"I told him 'I don't know anything about this,' and he said 'that's fine. If you're willing to learn and willing to work, I'll speak to you.'"

Hendrick proved to be a quick learner once he was on the job.

"I learned all about how to dry a house and what to do in a house fire, salvage content, clean content, how to do mold remediation, all that good stuff," he said.

Working from home, he would travel around the state examining sites and estimating how much a homeowner's claim might be worth.

"Homeowners really don't know what their homeowner's insurance is, they don't read the fine print," Hendrick said. "When the adjuster comes in after a disaster, he's really bound by what he can do. He can only do what the policy says he can do. So you need somebody to serve as the interpreter between the homeowner and the insurance company."

Hendrick saw his job as a way to help people who lost their homes get the best deal

they can from their insurance companies, and helping them rebuild after disaster strikes.

"There are a lot of justifiable claims expenses you can turn into your insurance company, but if you don't know how to word it, and if you don't know how to push for it, to fight for it, you're not going to get it," he said. "The insurance company isn't going to look for ways to give you money. That's not how they stay in business."

But after a few years in the restoration business, Hendrick got tired of the stresses of the job ("After a fire it's a horrific mess," he said. "It was an awful environment to work in.") and the late-night or early-morning hours he had to work.

"The insurance adjuster is laying in bed somewhere, and he calls and says 'hey, I've got a house fire out in Anderson. Would you ride out there and get me some pictures, start your estimate, tell them I'll be there in the morning?'" Hendrick recalls. "We did a lot of legwork for the adjusters, which is how we marketed ourselves to the adjusters."

Then, Hendrick heard the owners of Steamer's, Kevin and Melissa Patton, were interested in selling their restaurant, and Hendrick decided to jump at the opportunity.

"I started talking to them and it took about a year of communicating back and forth," he said. "Obviously, with the economy being down, we had to figure out a way to make it work."

Hendrick said the decision to take over the restaurant at the

time he did was a "gut check moment."

"I had a job where I had a company truck, a company cell phone, company computer, salary, benefits, nice bonuses. It was a great paying job, but I hated the work. So what do you do?"

It helped that he wasn't starting a new business from scratch. Steamer's already had a successful business model with an established clientele. Hendrick worked with the Pattons for a month before he took over the business last January so the transition would run more smoothly, and he retained most of the staff already working at the restaurant. But becoming a small business owner was a new challenge.

"The restaurant business is difficult in the sense that you're in production, you're creating a product, you're managing your personnel, you're in marketing and sales because you're figuring out how to market yourself," he said. "When I was a teacher, I



Seat yourself: Doug Hendrick, a former teacher at Clinton High and restoration business manager, followed a dream when he bought Steamer's restaurant. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

was part of a bureaucracy. I wasn't handling payroll, I wasn't doing administrative tasks. You're just teaching your class, and you don't see all the other things that go into it. In my business, you are all the other stuff."

Hendrick has made Steamer's work for the past year by turning it into a family business. His dad, now retired, sometimes works the grill. His mother handles accounting and payroll. His brother Kane works the register. Even his wife Lindsey, a teacher at Laurens Elementary School, comes in Thursday and Friday nights to work as a hostess.

"When Lindsey and I first got together we were both schoolteachers. We had the exact same schedule," he said. We were off for summer, off for Thanksgiving, off for Christmas, off for spring break. We had every weekend together. And when I took that other job I was on call, I had to work weekends. That created stress in our marriage.

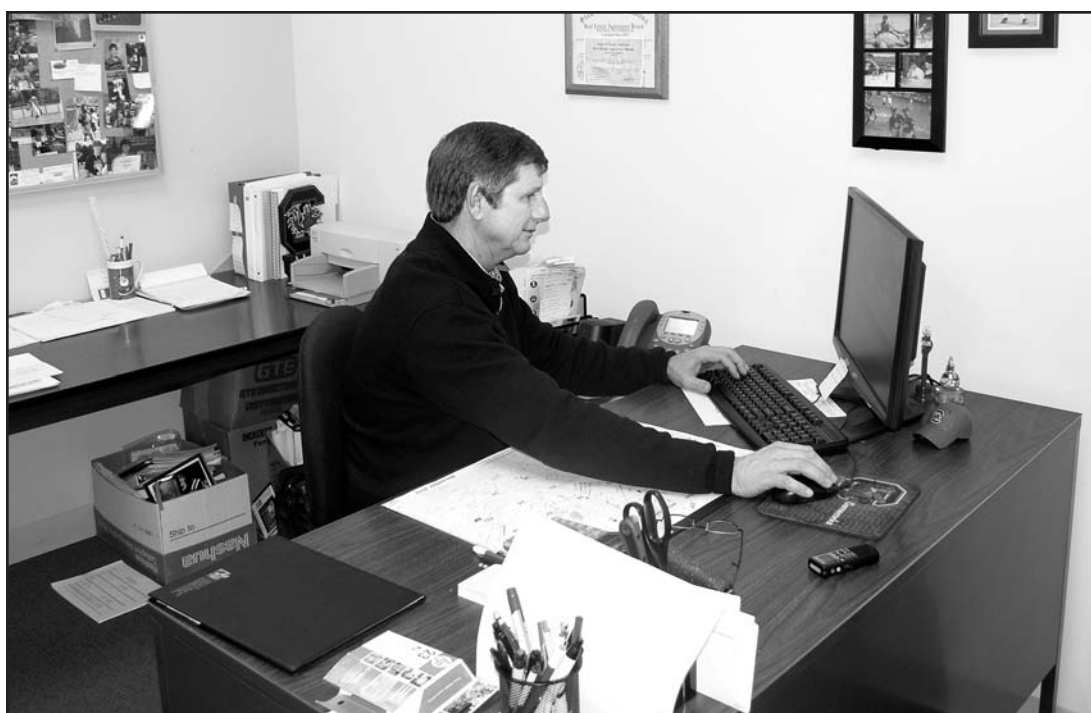
And at first, she wasn't the biggest fan of me doing this, because it takes time.

"She's been very supportive. She didn't want to see me get into the restaurant business, but she's been very supportive of me being in the restaurant business."

Another person Hendrick can turn to is Dempsey, the man who gave him his first restaurant job at 15.

"He's a great guy, smart, and he knows the business. That's a resource that other people just don't have," Hendrick said. "I've got the Pattons who I can call on, who have a vested interest in seeing me succeed. I've got my parents who have a vested interest in seeing me succeed. And I've got people like Tony that I can talk to and share advice."

Hendrick celebrated his one-year anniversary at Steamer's on Jan. 4. If he can hold together those resources, it shouldn't be his last.



Putting his skills to work for county: In the assessor's office, David Satterfield carried over some of the skills he picked up as a building inspector, only now his job was to assess buildings for their taxable value.

-- Photo by Bristow Marchant

Satterfield

From Page 7

came around here, people said we couldn't do it because nobody would pay the money to travel the Southeast with kids playing baseball."

But instead, the Clinton Reds became a huge success.

"I had a good group of parents and a good group of players, and we accomplished some

good things," Satterfield said. "We played in Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, New York. I actually took them to Cooperstown, N.Y., twice. We won numerous state championships, and all of that coming from the small community of Clinton and Laurens."

Looking back on that experience and the others on his resume, it seems like a long road

to travel for the head of a major county department, and Satterfield seems as surprised at where he's finished as anyone else.

"You just never know," he said. "Life gives you twists and turns, and you just never know what to expect until you get there. Nothing was really planned, it just seemed to happen."



Airport	3985 Torrington Road	Phone: 864-682-9620
Auditor	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite F	Phone: 864-984-2535
Board of Elections	Public Sq. Historic Courthouse	Phone: 864-984-4431
Buildings & Grounds	Mt. Vernon Church Road	Phone: 864-682-4935
Circuit Court	100 Hillcrest Square	Phone: 864-984-2076
Clerk of Court	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite B	Phone: 864-984-3538
Communications	321 South Harper Street	Phone: 864-984-0812
Coroner	216 West Main Street	Phone: 864-984-8804
County Administration	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-5484
County Council	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-5214
Detention Center	Templeton Road	Phone: 864-683-4055
Emergency Management	S. Harper Street	Phone: 864-984-3624
EMS	Highway # 76 Bypass	Phone: 864-984-0577
Family Court	100 Hillcrest Square	Phone: 864-984-4416
Finance	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-1882
Fire Department	#4 Irby Street	Phone: 864-984-4547
Fire/Rescue	321 South Harper Street	Phone: 864-984-3624
Human Resources	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-3691
Inspections and Permits	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite C	Phone: 864-984-6659
Landfill	127 ByPass	Phone: 864-682-2415
Library	1017 West Main Street	Phone: 864-984-0596
Magistrate	Templeton Road	Phone: 864-683-4485
Parks Recreation & Tourism	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-5484
Probate Court	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite A	Phone: 864-984-7315
Public Defender	509 N. Broad Street	Phone: 864-833-4748
Public Works	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-6812
Purchasing	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-5519
Risk Management	3 Catherine Street	Phone: 864-984-9604
Roads and Bridges	Mt. Vernon Church Road	Phone: 864-682-2485
Rural Collections	127 ByPass	Phone: 864-682-2415
Safe Home	500 Academy St.	Phone: 864-938-1136
Sheriff's Office	W. Main Street	Phone: 864-984-4967
Tax Assessor	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite D	Phone: 864-984-6546
Treasurer	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite E	Phone: 864-984-4742
Veterans Affairs	Public Sq. Historic Courthouse	Phone: 864-984-4041
Victim Assistance	100 Hillcrest Square-Suite K	Phone: 864-984-0706

laurenscountysc.org

Emil Finley: WLBG

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Emil Finley traveled around the country working at different radio stations before he finally came home to Laurens County and became the general manager at WLBG, which also happens to be one of the first stations he ever worked for.

"I've been here 27 and a half years," Finley said, sitting in his cramped office in the radio station at the bottom of a hill off Hillcrest Drive in Laurens. "I started here in June 1983. That may now be the longest anybody's managed the station, I don't know."

When Finley started working as the manager at WLBG Real Radio 860, he was still running the station for the former owners before his company, Southeastern Broadcast Associates, was able to take over.

"I bought the station, but I wasn't able to take it over until August when we got our FCC permit, so I was managing the station before I actually took it over," he said.

Before he became the president and general manager of WLBG, Finley grew up on a farm in Mountville, the oldest of four children. His father worked for Catawba Timber Company and his mother retired from a secretary job at Presbyterian College.

Finley's unusual first name comes from an unusual source.

"It's not a family name," he said. "My father knew an Emil in the Army Air Force during World War II, and he remembered the name."

Finley has fond memories of growing up in a farming family.

"My brother and I raised okra and brought it to Community Cash on Florida Street to sell," he remembers. "We just generally lived the rural lifestyle."

But Finley's life wasn't so rural that he couldn't listen over the airwaves to the rock music of the 1960s. Along with the sounds



On the air: Some of the on-air talent at WLBG Radio. From left, reporter Melissa Newstrand, hosts Bryan Bentley, Wyatt Mattison and the Rev. Anthony Sims, host of WLBG's gospel show. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

of the time came a lifelong interest in radio.

"I was fascinated by it as a kid, and I just never grew out of it," he said. "At first I was interested in the music, but after I got into it I started to gravitate toward the news."

That interest carried over to his future career at the Laurens radio station.

"Our big thrust is local coverage," he said. "We cover city council, the district school boards, county council, and any other regular meetings... Our primary focus is community news. Where most stations might have a minute or two of local news in the morning, we have 15 minutes every half-hour."

Finley got his start in radio at Clinton's WPCB in the late '60s as a weekend DJ, and continued to work for local radio stations while he attended Spartanburg Methodist College. In 1971, he married his wife Mary Lou, who grew up in Cross Hill down the

road from the Finleys' farm. Today, they have two children, Jonathan and Jennifer.

In 1971-72, Finley got a job at WLBG under longtime owner Bill Hogan of Clinton, and at the same time developed an appreciation for the station's history.

"Bill Hogan owned the station from 1955 to 1981, so I may have just passed him (in length of ownership)," Finley said. "The station was started by the Todd family in 1948, and we actually have news clippings of Gov. Strom Thurmond coming here."

After leaving Laurens, Finley spent the next decade traveling around the country, either managing or co-owning stations in Kentucky, Indiana and North Carolina, before he came back to take over the old station.

"Realizing how important (radio) could be as I owned and managed these stations, when the opportunity came up to buy a station in my home county, I came to it with that basic idea," Finley

said. "When I bought it, the station had fallen on hard times, and I worked hard to put it in the forefront of the local community."

As the station's general manager, Finley says it's his job to manage the day-to-day operations of WLBG. He sells advertising spots to local businesses and makes sure the station's equipment works properly.

"I make sure there's enough toilet paper in the bathroom," he jokes.

Finley also tries to be at the forefront of the community in his own life. He's served on the boards of the YMCA and the United Way, and is a member of the Laurens Rotary Club. Currently, he's working with the Literacy Council to improve reading skills.

"We try to get them up to a fourth or fifth grade reading level, and then we can send them on to get their GED," he said. "There are a lot of people here who read or write well below that level."



Sending a signal: WLBG general manager Emil Finley stands with station reporter Melissa Newstrand beside one of the broadcast dishes behind the radio station on a hillside off Hillcrest Drive. Finley has owned the station for 27 years. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

Finley also covers meetings and news events for the station, a duty he shares with on-air host Randy Stevens and news reporter Melissa Newstrand. In all, WLBG has about a dozen employees, he said.

The station's primary news coverage comes from "Good Morning Upcountry," WLBG's morning show on the air from 6 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.

"We have our community calendar, feature stories, we do interviews in the morning, and we do news, which I sometimes fill-in for," Finley said.

WLBG also broadcasts sports for Laurens District 55 High School and Presbyterian College. The station carries live coverage of parades, and in what Finley feels is one of its most important services, broadcasts regular updates during severe weather.

"I find that people who would not usually listen to us do come to us when there's bad weather," he said.

The late Gene Pinson, who was a station reporter, considered that fact when his own house was

hit by a twister.

"He said to me, 'Emil, you're the only station smart enough to have a reporter embedded in the tornado,'" Finley said.

Finley's approach to running a radio station has had an effect on Wyatt Mattison, one of his on-air talents.

"I worked nighttime at a station in Greenville, and they would just hand me the records and then I was on my own," Mattison said. "Here I learned more in a month than the whole time I was working up there... I learned how to do a visual in an ad. Now I know what catches your ear."

One of WLBG's biggest attractions isn't its news programming, it's the station's gospel music show.

"We need to serve the community as completely as we can, and the gospel show reaches thousands of people. That's very important to them," Finley said. "That's why our tagline is 'Real Radio.' It's not just news. It's not just sports. It's not just music. We're a full-service radio station."



\$1,000 off
with purchase
of two or more
implements¹

0% FINANCING
AVAILABLE²

DOZENS OF IMPLEMENTS AND NOW 1,000 REASONS TO BUY THEM.



2520 COMPACT UTILITY TRACTOR
• 26.4 gross engine hp/20.5 PTO hp*
• Twin Touch™ hydrostatic transmission
• Cruise control and power steering



2320 COMPACT UTILITY TRACTOR
• 24 gross engine/18 PTO hp*
• Twin Touch hydrostatic transmission
• iMatch™ AutoHitch™ compatible

JOHNDEERE.COM



EPTING TURF & TRACTOR, INC
3630 HURRICANE CHURCH ROAD
CLINTON, SC 29325
(864) 833-5337
EPTINGTURFANDTRACTOR.COM

*Offer valid from 2/1/2011 to 5/2/2011. \$1,000 off any 2000 Series. Offer not available at all locations; see your local John Deere dealer for details. All attachments and/or implements included in offer are John Deere- and/or Frontier-branded. *Offer valid from 2/1/2011 until 8/1/2011. Subject to approved credit on John Deere Financial Installment Plan. Some restrictions apply, so see your dealer for complete details and other financing options. *Manufacturer's estimate of power (ISO) per 97/68/ED. John Deere's green and yellow color scheme, the leaping deer symbol and JOHN DEERE are trademarks of Deere & Company.

AM2EBU1A148177-00340753

Horace Payne: H.D. Payne & Co.

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

When H.D. Payne & Co. first opened its doors almost 80 years ago, it was Clinton's go-to store for almost any hardware need.

Located on Airport Road between West Main Street and Bailey Plant Road, H.D. Payne has sold everything from small appliances, batteries and paint up to larger washing machines and refrigerators to gasoline and heating oil.

"Pretty much like an old hardware store, you might say," said Horace Payne, son of the store's founder H.D. Payne and the current owner of the business. "There weren't a lot of places around here where you could buy something like that, except in Greenville."

Today, the store sells a smaller showroom of major appliances and petroleum products, but the store still has strong connections to the city's history.

H.D. Payne was founded in 1932 as a partnership between the older Payne and M.S. Bailey, with Bailey as a silent partner and Payne the one who ran the business day-to-day. In the early 1940s, Bailey sold a 12.5 percent stake each to M.D. and W.C. Milam, who came on board to help Payne run the business. M.D. Milam would go on to serve as the store's manager for decades.

"He was at PC when he came here, and when my daddy got sick he talked him into quitting college and running the business," the younger Payne remembers.

Horace Payne — known as "Buzz," a nickname he's had since his school days — says the company has remained a family business ever since.

"When Si Bailey died in 1958, his share went into his



Power supply: These tanks behind the H.D. Payne store can hold up to 2,000 gallons each of fuel oil, kerosene or diesel. Gas products make up one of the top sellers for the old-fashioned hardware store, which has been in business since 1932. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

daughter's hands," he said. "But when W.C. Milam died, he had two children, and it just kept breaking down like that, and pretty much forced me to buy them out.

"Either that," he said, "or look for a job when I was about 55 years old."

Horace was born in 1941 when the business was just beginning to take off. After attending Clemson Agricultural College and graduating from St. Andrews Presbyterian College in Laurinburg, N.C., he spent six months on a National Guard assignment in El Paso before coming home in January 1965 to work in his father's shop, something he's done for the last 46 years.

"I worked in the front office," he said. "I ordered case goods, motor oil, sorted appliances and paint, menial stuff."

In those days, H.D. Payne's operations were split between two sites. Since 1950, the company has had an office, storefront and warehouses on Airport Road, in a building formerly owned by Pitts's Cotton Implements.

"We did some remodeling," Payne said. "That front door used to be a garage door that you could drive a tractor inside of, park it in the back and run cooler through it."

The other site was once located on West Carolina Avenue near where the railroad tracks diverge. It was here where Buzz first started work in 1965.

"It's hard to imagine it being there now, but it used to be a little building that was a warehouse," he said. "We had drums and cases, and part of it was an office with a door like that one right there where we loaded up

trucks, and we had a recapping shop for recapping tires."

H.D. Payne called this building their center service station. It was where most of the company's bookkeeping was done, and because of its location, it was also able to provide some unique services to the railroad.

"Trains used to park there by rail. They'd bring the rail car up on a side track and we'd pump it full," Payne said. "There used to be a side track there, and we used it many, many years ago."

Part of Payne's job in those days was taking products off the trains and transporting it to the store on Airport.

"We use to get antifreeze here on a side track and move that to the back of a truck, then move it and unload it again, so it took two trips to unload it," he said. "I was a lot younger then."

Eventually, Payne became a



Still in business: Horace "Buzz" Payne, left, runs the business started by his father H.D. along with manager Josh Nelson, right. The "old hardware store" still sells a range of appliances and petroleum products on Clinton's Airport Road. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

more active partner in the business as the first generation passed on. In 2000, he bought out longtime manager M.D. Milam to take full control of H.D. Payne.

"Mr. Milam had a stroke, and he went home said 'I won't be back,'" Payne remembers. "Then I incorporated the business separately. Before that it had been a partnership... because in a partnership the man who owns 1 percent has as much say as the man who owns 99 percent. In a corporation, it's majority rules."

Today, Payne splits ownership of the company with his two sisters. He controls 52 percent of H.D. Payne, while Virginia Lukstat, who lives in Virginia, owns 39 percent and Amelia Hollis, who lives at the Presbyterian Community Home, controls 9 percent.

Over the four and a half decades Payne has worked in the old store, he's seen the hardware

store go from being an all-purpose store to a more niche outlet selling a smaller range of items.

Because of Payne's health, Josh Nelson manages the day-to-day operations of the store now. He's also seen the business change since he started at H.D. Payne in 1987.

"It's changed a whole lot as far as I can tell," Nelson said. "They used to sell tractors, tires, batteries, TVs, paints, lights. We still have light bulbs, but we don't buy them anymore, and we still have appliances and fuel oils but we got rid of the paint when I first started. What we do the most of (now) is fueling."

Today, the store has five full-time employees, down from a high of 15. Nelson runs the business when Payne is out. They have two truck drivers and a service man to do repairs, and Payne's wife Susan works in the back office of the showroom.

Payne, Page 11

Sharon O'Bryant: PRTC

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Sharon O'Bryant grew up on a rural coop telephone. Today, she manages one as the human resources and public relations director at PRTC.

Growing up in Lanford, a small community on Highway 221 north of Ora, O'Bryant's family was on a party line provided by the Piedmont Rural Telephone Cooperative. She continued to use the family phone line after high school, when she got a job with PRTC, something that didn't sit well with her uncle.

"He used to run me off the phone all the time, because I'd been on the phone too long, even if I just picked it up," she said.

Then, one day, her uncle deviated from his normal routine.

"He always hitched rides into town with me every day, and I'd let him out wherever he wanted out, and he'd hitch rides back to Lanford," O'Bryant said. "Then one day he said 'I'm not stopping here today, I'm going to Piedmont Rural.' I dropped him off, he went in the front door, I went in the back door, and when I got up front he's complaining about me being on the phone so much."

O'Bryant's career at PRTC can be measured in 10-year increments. From the time she joined the company in 1973, she estimates she worked for 10 years as a customer service representative out of the old office on Spring Street. Then she worked for "maybe 10 years" in the plant department as an assignment dispatcher. Eventually, she moved back to the business office for "about 10 years" in the finance department.

It was while she was working in finance that O'Bryant picked up her current position, although it was a surprise to her at the time.

"I had an office right around that corner," she recalls, pointing down the hall of the PRTC office on Anderson Drive in Laurens. "Somebody asked me something about HR, and I said 'I don't



Hello, operator: Sharon O'Bryant stands behind an old-fashioned switchboard that sits in PRTC's office on Anderson Drive in Laurens. O'Bryant handles human resources and public relations at the company, the latest of her duties in her time at PRTC. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

know,' and they said 'well, you're the HR person.' I said 'no, I'm not.' They said 'well, this is what your title says,' and I said 'Well, nobody told me.'

"That's kind of how I got involved in HR," she said. "Things like that would not happen today by no means."

In her HR position, O'Bryant handles employee benefits, and benefits for company retirees and the board of directors.

"Good grief, I don't stop," she said. "I handle any HR issues, and I handle training for our employees, and then in the public relations area, I work in the community. I've participated in all the community events that the company's involved in."

It's not a stretch to say O'Bryant is PRTC's human resources department. Except for some help she gets from finance's administrative assistant, she's the only staff member in the department.

"It's a lot of in-your-face, day-to-day dealing with employees. Of course, we deal with

every issue that's brought to us, and I'm constantly there to help the other supervisors if they come across situations that they don't know exactly how to handle," O'Bryant said. "They can call me, even if I'm at home, they can call me, because I'd rather solve that problem correctly right there than trying to solve it later when circumstances might not be quite so easy."

After almost four decades with the company, O'Bryant knows a lot of the history of the telephone coop.

"The coop was formed in the '50s to provide services to people in the rural areas who didn't have services because it was too hard to lay cable," she says. "You might have 10 miles of road and three houses on it. Companies just didn't see it as feasible to come in and plow lines to serve those people. So people in our area went to Washington and tried to get a loan to build a network for our rural area."

That network formed the basis for the rural telephone co-

operative, which still serves as the basis for PRTC. In the meantime, the company has expanded from the rural areas into services inside the city limits of Laurens.

"We purchased rights into this territory, so that's the CLEC (competitive local exchange carrier), so we can service landlines in the City of Laurens," O'Bryant said. "We sell the same services for CLEC and ILEC in the retail store."

The ILEC (incumbent local exchange carrier) is the coop in the rural service areas.

O'Bryant got her start selling what at the time was PRTC's only product — landline-based telephones — a far cry from the current array of wireless phones, DSL internet service and Dish Network satellites on sale at the retail store beside Wal-Mart.

After that, O'Bryant became a dispatcher for the company's fleet of service technicians, dispensing assignments and helping the engineering department develop its work schedule.

She enjoyed working in dis-



Line one: Sharon O'Bryant has worked all her life for Piedmont Rural Telephone, after growing up using a rural coop phone at her home in Lanford. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

patching, but eventually she was asked to take up her current post in the finance department, including responsibility for serving employees and customers alike.

In her position in public relations, O'Bryant is also involved in many activities in the community. She sits on the boards of the United Way, the Red Cross and the hospital foundation board, where she serves as secretary.

She's also involved with Relay for Life and the March of Dimes, which are sponsored by PRTC, and works with the committees overseeing Squealin' on the Square and events in Little River Park.

"The spring events, the fireworks, we sponsor all those events and I'm always at those," she said. "I have a passion for helping others, and by serving on these boards, I have an opportunity to meet the community and know the areas of need, and I think PRTC plays a huge part in contributing to our community."

In her spare time, she also teaches an aerobics class at the Laurens YMCA, and she teaches Zumba, a Latin dance exercise.

While she's so active in the Laurens community, she continues to live in her childhood home community in Lanford.

"I basically live on my great-grandparents' old home place," O'Bryant said. "In fact the rocks of their house are still standing in my yard. We usually gather around those rocks and make family photos a lot of times."

Even after her years of service, O'Bryant says she enjoys her work and has no plans to step down anytime soon.

"I love people. I'm really a people person," she said. "I love helping people and assisting people, and I love taking care of my employees and retirees and the board. Especially the retirees, because without them, we wouldn't be where we are. They're former employees who have made the company successful."

Andy Howard: County PR&T

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Andy Howard has only been on the job for a year, but he has some big plans for Laurens County's parks.

"There's never been a capital plan for the parks, or a mission or anything like that, so I'm working on that as we speak," he said. "Basically where I want the parks to be, what improvements need to be made, how we're going to fund it, things like that."

Winter is considered a slow season for the director of the county's Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department, but Howard, who took over the job in March when former director Bill Erkes retired, has kept busy.

He spent the past few months adding new features and improving old ones to Laurens County Recreation Park on Calvin Bridges Road, one of seven parks maintained by his department. Howard counted them off at the picnic area at the recreation park.

"We've got this park here, we've got one in Joanna, we've got one in Cross Hill, we've got a fishing pier in Waterloo on Lake Greenwood, and we've got a leased park in Hickory Tavern that doesn't actually belong to us, but we lease it so it's considered a county park and it's open to the public," he said.

Two other parks are in the planning stages; a boat ramp at Boyd's Mill Pond and a kayak put-in at Tumbler Shoals, with the idea that kayakers could travel down the Reedy River all the way to Boyd's Mill.

"Boyd's Mill was kind of landlocked by private property until we bought that property out there," Howard said. "That was all done with oil-spill money."

Howard isn't sure how much land his department is responsible for maintaining. According to "a very old document," Laurens



Come and play: Clinton native Andy Howard, left, was named director of the Laurens County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department last year. He spends most of his time in the county recreation park off Calvin Bridges Road or other parks maintained by the county. At right is the parks maintenance supervisor Scott Weeks. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

County owns 74 acres off Calvin Bridges between Highway 76 and Torrington Road, including the property of the county airport, but Howard estimates just 20 to 30 "useable" acres at the recreation park.

The properties in Cross Hill, Hickory Tavern and Joanna total between 11 and 20 acres, he said, "and the Boyd's Mill Pond is no acres, because it's all on the water."

Even though Howard has only been with the parks department a short time (before he became director, he was the parks' maintenance supervisor for two years), taking over PRT has in some ways been a homecoming for him.

He was born and raised in Clinton to and by a family of millworkers — his mother worked in Lydia Mill and his father worked at Clinton Mill until he passed away at the age of 38.

"After my dad passed away, I lived with my aunts and uncles and they all lived in Clinton and worked in the mills," he said.

After high school, he spent eight years in the Marine Corps. An injury required him to get two rods placed in his back, and he spent the last two years of his service working as a recruiter in Inman. During this time he married his high school sweetheart Christine Ellis and they built a house there together.

But once Howard got out of the Corps, he decided to resettle in his hometown, and found work at Presbyterian College.

"Being in the Marine Corps, I love being outside, and my old high school teacher Tom Miller worked at the college, and he said 'I need some help, come work out here,'" Howard said.

He started as an assistant electrician in 2005-06, and eventually became the school's operational

supervisor. But a round of cutbacks put Howard out of work in 2007, and he had to start looking for work again.

"I didn't want to drive, because I knew from living in Inman when I had to drive to Clinton, I didn't want to do that again," he said. "So I started looking for something in county, and the maintenance supervisor position came open."

The maintenance supervisor's job is basically cutting grass and maintaining buildings and equipment in the county parks. Howard wasn't on the job long before he decided this was a job he wanted to keep.

"I started here and I loved it," he said. "So I went to school online, and this May I'm going to graduate with my bachelor's in Parks and Recreation Management, with an emphasis on tourism."

He found an online course with Northern Arizona University, the only school offering a parks and recreation degree online, and set his sights on earning his degree on top of his other responsibilities.

"I have twin 3-year-olds, and when I started they were only 1 year old," he said. "So you can imagine working a full time job, taking care of twins, while my wife works too. It was difficult, but I think the dedication I had in the Marine Corps helped me stick through that."

Besides, Howard says he had an extra motive for finishing his



All-terrain: Andy Howard regularly makes the rounds in the county parks to look for any damaged equipment that needs fixing. After being raised in Clinton by an extended family of millworkers, Howard recently returned to Laurens County after a stint with the Marine Corps. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

degree.

"I knew my boss, Bill Erkes, was going to retire," he said. "I wanted his job because I had so many things I wanted to do out here, and I knew the only way I'd get to do it is if I had some say in it."

Since he got the director's job last year, Howard has worked to improve and add to the park's services. One of his first acts was to move the playground equipment in Laurens County Park to the area beside the softball fields, using grant money.

"That playground equipment used to be in the woods and that was very dangerous," he said. "It's getting so much use now I'm thinking we need to put a bigger playground out."

To satisfy local soccer players who share a practice field with pee-wee football teams, the parks department also bought a pair of combo soccer-football goals; the lower portion is a netted goal for soccer, but with a pair of uprights extending from the crossbar to allow place-kickers to take field goals.

Next, he added an even more specialty sport.

"I've probably been approached by 20 different people saying 'hey, you need to put in a disc golf course. I've got to drive all the way to Simpsonville to play disc golf,'" he said.

Disc golf, like it sounds, is a sport inspired by golf, but where players throw flying discs at a raised metal basket instead of a hole.

"From working at the college, I saw the kids playing disc golf all the time," Howard said, "so we put in a course that's only nine holes, but it's stretched out over three-quarters of a mile."

Those are just some of the plans Howard wants to see implemented at Laurens County parks, despite heading a small department that consists only of himself and new maintenance supervisor Scott Weeks.

Weeks, a former football player at Clemson University, worked in trucking before he came to the parks department under similar circumstances as Howard.

"I was out of work, and I'd never worked out here," he said. "Then this came open and it felt like a perfect fit at the time."

Working alongside Howard, Weeks has picked up his zest for the job.

"He's easy-going, easy to work with. I'm probably harder on myself than he is," Weeks said. "There are times when you have to go above and beyond, and I come from the same background he does, and that's just our work ethic. Whatever job you're doing, if you don't take pride in what you're doing, you're not going to do a good job."

"I learned that in the Marine Corps. I loved doing that," Howard said. "Transitioning to the college, that was great, but if I'd come straight to this job it'd be just as good because you can't ask for anything better to do."

Payne

From Page 10

The hardware business has changed so much over the last half-century that Payne now thinks he'll be the last member of his family to run the store.

"I'm looking for somebody to buy it. It's a dying business. I

have children, but they're not interested in it," he said. "It's either going to be sold off to a larger company or I'll shut it down and auction it off, sell the real estate."

But after spending so much of his life working in the store, Payne doesn't see himself

pulling away from Airport Road anytime soon. Asked how long he thinks he'll continue to work in the store, his wife chimes in with the answer.

"Til he dies," she said. Payne laughs. "Yeah," he said. "That's probably right."

Carter

From Page 3

Carter, known around town by his nickname "Bobby," made his first successful run for public office.

"This was in 1976, same time that Jimmy Carter ran for president," he says. "My mom said 'with Jimmy Carter in Washington and Bobby Carter in Gray Court, the South's going to rise again.'"

After a decade as a councilman, Carter was elected mayor of Gray Court, and has served in that position ever since. In his time in office, he's seen the town change and the town's responsibilities contract; he once shared town hall with police and fire department, but today the town is part of the Gray Court Volunteer Fire District, and public safety is contracted to the Sheriff's Office.

"The bulk of our services are

contracted out. We only have two full time employees," Carter said. "We started out with a private (trash) hauler years ago, and then tried to go back and do it ourselves, then went back to a private hauler... Business permits are handled by the county. The county collects our taxes. There are just many things that we spun off because we didn't have the staff or the resources to pay for all this stuff."

At the same time, he's seen Gray Court grow. Ten years ago, the town welcomed ISO Poly to a facility within the town limits, and Carter said he'd like to extend the town's sidewalks two and a half miles to Owings Industrial Park so that, like his former classmates, "people can walk to work."

Now running for his seventh term, Carter's main focus remains quality of life issues. He

wants to beautify the downtown area and attract a grocery store to the community, as well as add baseball fields and playground equipment to the town park.

"We want to be a whole community, where you don't have to drive 100 miles to do what you want to do," he said.

The mayor sees a bright future for his community. The 2000 census showed Gray Court's population had passed 1,000 residents for the first time, and Carter would like to see the town grow even more through annexation, "out toward 385, toward Fountain Inn, toward Laurens, all around."

"When I was growing up, people used to say that with the way Greenville would grow and the way Laurens would grow, one day Gray Court would be the headquarters."

CeramTec

THE CERAMIC EXPERTS

Proud to be a part of the community
since 1962

CeramTec is active in electronics, electrical engineering, hermetic systems, piezo-technology, medical technology, mechanical systems, chemical, textile, industrial equipment, machining or metal cutting, and many other segments. We offer a wide variety of solutions for each of this broad range of industries, which more specifically play a vital role in the semiconductor, aerospace, automotive, telecommunications, military and defense, medical, and oil exploration markets.

60% of current CeramTec employees live
in Laurens County

CeramTec North America Corporation

One Technology Place
Laurens, South Carolina

1-864-682-3215

1-800-752-7325

Kaye Fridy: County probate judge

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Kaye Fridy isn't a lawyer, but that didn't stop her from being a judge.

Fridy was working as a clerk in the office of the Laurens County probate judge in 1993, when Judge Bobbie Wilson stepped down. Fridy was appointed to serve the rest of Wilson's term, presiding over legal issues that touch on some of the most personal issues of county residents' lives.

"Probate courts handle marriage licenses, estate administrations when someone passes away, (and) protective proceedings on adults and minors when it involves money or assets. We do involuntary mental and substance abuse commitments," Fridy says, sitting in her office at the Laurens County Judicial Center. "Probably 90 percent of our work is administrative and 10 percent judicial."

Since then, Fridy (pronounced like "Friday") has been elected to five full terms as Laurens County's only probate judge, most recently this past November. All this despite the fact the judge is not a legal scholar by education. She graduated from Spartanburg Technical College with a degree in secretarial science with an emphasis on legal files, and took a job as a clerk under former Probate Judge Hewlette Wasson. After more than 16 years in the office, she felt ready to move up to the top job herself.

"You don't have to have a law degree to be a probate judge," she said. "Experience sure helps though."

Fridy was born in Enoree, where her parents worked for Inman Mills. She graduated from Woodruff High School, but she and her family would often make trips to Laurens when she was growing up.

"This was the closest small town to go to other than Woodruff, so I was familiar with



Judgement call: Judge Kaye Fridy sits in her office at Hillcrest Judicial Center in Laurens. Fridy worked her way up from a clerical position to serve five terms as Laurens County's probate judge. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

it more than surrounding towns," she said. "We would come here to shop or go out to eat. Of course back then there weren't a whole lot of places to go. There weren't a lot of fast food places like there are now. It's grown a lot."

One day not long after she finished school, Fridy brought her grandmother to Laurens to have her hair done. While sitting in the beauty shop, she saw an ad in the paper for a clerical position in the probate court.

Because of her degree, "I thought I might like working in the court system," Fridy said. "It worked out better than I anticipated. I never expected I would be probate judge one day. That thought never entered my mind when I applied for the job."

"So I was doing somebody a good deed, and it turned out to be a good deed for me in the long run."

Fridy was attracted to the job because it gave her a way to help other people through tough times.

"I love working with people, and being able to help someone through difficult times is very rewarding to me," she said. "This is a job where, when somebody comes to us, they have gone through the loss of a loved one, or they have a loved one going through a crisis as far as the commitment process goes. To be able to lessen the anxiety and the stress associated with situations like that, to me, is rewarding."

Fridy was the deputy clerk in the probate judge's office when Judge Wilson stepped down in the middle of her term for health reasons. After more than a decade and a half watching what a probate judge does, Fridy decided to take the next step and seek to be appointed judge herself.

"This was something you had to go after. You had to initiate. So there were several others that had an interest in it as well," she said. "Thankfully, through the help of Sen. James Bryan, who was our senator at the time, I was ap-

pointed."

It was a decision that obviously paid off. "I've been probate judge now longer than I worked here before," Fridy said.

Fridy got the encouragement she needed to run for public office from her husband Steve Fridy, who works at New Horizons Electric Cooperative.

"He really encouraged me to do it, and he's been very supportive of my choice," Fridy said.

The Fridys have a 23-year-old son, Josh, who works at Joe Kirby State Farm in Laurens.

In her position as judge, Fridy is supported by an associate probate judge, a deputy clerk and four other clerks who assist with the wide variety of cases that come to her desk.

"I do all the mental health that we do. (Attorney) Don Hocker is my associate probate judge, and he hears most of the contested cases that we have," she said. "It just depends on what's going on. We don't have terms of court like



In session: Probate Judge Kaye Fridy sits in her courtroom at the Hillcrest Judicial Center in Laurens. Fridy doesn't preside over many cases. She says 90 percent of her job is administrative and most issues are resolved before they go to court. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

magistrates and family court and circuit court. It depends on what's litigated in specific cases. Most cases start out informally and uncontested. Some work themselves into a contested case, but mostly they're informal, uncontested cases."

In her new term, Fridy would like to make the office's large collection of records more easily available to the public.

"We just got a new software system, and we're beginning to image our records," she said. "I would love to get the old records imaged so the public could view those on the computer instead of having to pull the original files. We have them microfilmed and we could eventually retrieve those rolls from archives and have them reduced to image, but of course that's very costly, so it's something we're going to have to work towards through time."

The record room directly behind Fridy's office is a treasure trove of Laurens County history,

with records dating back to the first European settlements in the county in the 18th century.

"We always have ancestor searchers looking for those old records for their family history," she said, going through the stacks of old records that fill several shelves and well-indexed filing cabinets. "I've not moved any off site, even those oldest records. And as long as I can keep them in the office, I would love to be able to, but we'll have to see what space permits us to do in the future."

Now in her fifth term on the bench, Fridy hopes to continue doing what attracted her to the job in the first place; helping people.

"I enjoy working with the people and helping the people, working one-on-one with families. My least favorite, of course, is the contested matters," she said. "I would hope that I have made it easier for families, because we try to help them as much as we can."

Rhonda Cruickshanks: WPCC

By Bristow Marchant
Horizons 2011

Before Rhonda Cruickshanks was named general manager of WPCC a decade ago, she had no prior experience with the world of broadcasting.

"Nope, none," she said in her office at WPCC Sports Radio 1410 on Highway 72 south of Clinton.

Yet today, Cruickshanks not only runs day-to-day affairs at the radio station she co-owns with her husband Sandy, she's also the on-air co-host of the station's morning show "The Dog House," and serves on the state board of the South Carolina Broadcasters Association.

It's quite a transformation for the former stay-at-home mom and kindergarten teacher.

"I kind of learned as I went," she said. "I had to learn all the FCC rules and regulations. We have to pay fees, keep our public files updated. They come and check on us and if we don't have everything in order, they can fine us or even close our doors."

Cruickshanks was born in Newberry, where her father worked on the railroad. He was stationed in Michigan during World War II, and there met Cruickshanks's mother, a Canadian woman from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. After the war, she moved south with her new husband. It was quite a change from the shores of the Great Lakes.

"She got used to it. She was in love," Cruickshanks says of her mother's international move. "She only got her U.S. citizenship about eight years ago."

Cruickshanks's family later moved to Clinton, where she graduated from Clinton High School and attended USC Sumter before getting married and settling down to raise three children, Alexander, Michael and Catherine.

When her youngest child Catherine was in kindergarten at First Presbyterian Church, Cruickshanks was asked if she would take over for one of the teachers who was leaving.



Unleashed: Rhonda Cruickshanks is manager and co-owner of WPCC Sports Radio, Clinton's only commercial radio station. She learned how to run a radio station on the job and now keeps WPCC on the air 24 hours a day. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

"I started with Catherine's class and then I did it for 12 years," Cruickshanks said.

During that time she also did substitute teaching, until she started doing parttime work at the radio station.

"(My husband) and Donny Wilder bought into the station together, and then Sandy bought it outright from Donny when he went to the (State) House," Cruickshanks remembers.

For years, the Cruickshankses' only interaction with WPCC was her husband's sportscasting duties.

"He did PC and Clinton High football games for about 25 years, mainly as a hobby, just a way to continue staying involved with football," she said.

Cruickshanks and her children would often travel along with the broadcast crew to football games, but unaware that she would one day be in charge of a sports radio station, she paid little attention to the games.

"I would bring a book to read or just socialize with the other parents," she said. "I got to know them, and the kids were young

enough where they would just play."

Other than their family trips to the games, "We were not hands-on owners," Cruickshanks said. "We always hired people to run the station until I took over."

Cruickshanks came to the station in 1998 to do bookkeeping and administrative work part time, then in 2000 took over the general manager's duties full-time.

As manager, it's Cruickshanks's job to sell the advertising that keeps the station on the air, and make sure everything at the station is working properly so WPCC literally says on the air.

"I'm monitoring it 24/7," she says. "If it goes down in the middle of the night, I have to come out here to make sure everything cuts back on."

Along with program and production director Chris Burgin and board operator Thomas Johnson, Cruickshanks has managed to keep the station on the air for the last decade. Shortly after she took over in 2000, WPCC even managed to secure an ESPN Radio franchise.

"We tried to get them before. That came open because whatever station had them before switched to a new format, and we just got it," she said. "Before that we had a station out of Chicago called the Sporting News that covered a lot of Northern stuff, but really didn't cover anything down here. ESPN gave us a much wider variety of programming, and a lot better programming."

About six years ago, Cruickshanks became part of that programming herself, stepping up to the microphone to co-host the station's morning talk show "The Dog House."

"As you go through all that, you learn more and more about it," she said. "At first I didn't like the sound of my voice when I heard it in the commercials, but now I'm more comfortable with it. It's a lot easier."

For the last nine years, Cruickshanks has also been the regional representative on the board of directors for the South Carolina Broadcasters Association, where she gets to act as a voice for her industry throughout



Lighting up the boards: WPCC's Rhonda Cruickshanks had no broadcast experience when she became the station's manager, and now co-hosts the station's morning show the Dog House. — Photo by Bristow Marchant

the state.

"On the board, I get to meet radio and TV broadcasters from all over the whole state, and stay up to date on what's going on in the business," Cruickshanks said. "Now I can call the station manager at WYFF in Greenville and he'll answer any of my questions. It's been wonderful."

The SCBA is just one of several boards Cruickshanks serves on.

She sits or has sat on the Clinton Business Association, the Clinton Youth Rally Committee, the school improvements committee, the board of the Laurens County Health Care Foundation, the SCBA's educational foundation board, the AMIKids board, and the Shop Laurens County First board.

She also serves as vice president of the Clinton High Booster Club, and after serving two terms on the board of the Laurens County Chamber of Commerce, was recently named the Chamber's ambassador of the fourth quarter.

Of all those activities, Cruickshanks said she finds the most benefit from being a Chamber ambassador.

"That gets me out to meet and visit with other business owners,"

Cruickshanks said. "I keep in contact with them, and that helps later with sales."

She also currently serves as chair of the Clinton Business Association, and was there when it changed its name from the Downtown Association to appeal to businesses throughout the city. (WPCC is outside the city limits, but Cruickshanks sits on the board because of her husband's property in downtown Clinton.)

"Because I'm the chair, I'm in charge of the meetings and I work alongside Diane (Wyatt, the CBA's executive director) to plan all the events and make sure everything runs smoothly," she said. "That also helps me get out and learn about all the businesses in the city limits."

In order to sell her business to potential advertisers, the mom who used to read at football games has learned more and more about sports.

"In sales, it helps to know what you're selling," she said. "You want to be able to talk about it halfway intelligently so you can convince them it's something they want to advertise on."

She also now knows whose kids are playing on her station. "That helps too."

Our hospital is with you... every step of the way!



From the birth of a family member through the illnesses of life, we're with you every step of the way. Our Mission – to meet the health needs of our community – has grown into the 21st century with an outstanding network of care, from people who care about you.

Because we value the lives of Laurens County, the caring comes easy. Our growth into the community – outpatient rehabilitation to pediatric clinics to skilled care – shows that we care enough to be there for you and your family, for generations to come.

Laurens County Health Care System

P.O. Drawer 976 • 22725 Hwy 76 East • Clinton, SC 29325
(864) 833-9100 • www.lchcs.org



They're in the Samaritan's Corner: Ron and Nancy Doves' work with the food bank is part of what earned them the nomination for Citizen of the Year. "Ron and Nancy Dove have tirelessly and effectively handled the day-to-day operations of this volunteer ministry," said Judy Bailey, a United Ministries volunteer who nominated the Doves along with her husband Melvin.
- Photo by Bristow Marchant

Doves

From Page 2

"And at school, they got on the Honor Roll because they knew it was what we expected and that they had teachers who would be in contact with us. It's amazing what consistency at home and at school can achieve."

For now, the Doves' main focus is on the food pantry, where Ron even grows his own food to give out in the spring-time.

"The piece up there, I found out there used to be a mule stable or something," he said. "I filled up a much bigger area and I ran into all kinds of horseshoes, and I started to ask around. They left us all kinds of fertilizer. I just put it in the ground and it

grows."

Volunteers help Ron and his old, donated tiller produce a crop of collard greens, tomatoes, green beans, turnip greens and peppers each year.

"We have kids from our church who do the planting," Nancy said. "There are a lot of groups helping out."

"Boy Scouts, church groups from all different churches," Ron continued. "It really is a community thing, and they rise to the occasion."

The younger Doves have followed in their parents' footsteps. Their oldest son is an attorney in Washington, D.C., and the other two are pastors in Maryland and Kentucky. Their daughter, a graduate of the Uni-

versity of South Carolina business school, is now pursuing a master's at Wheaton College.

If one thing can get the Doves to slow down it's their children, who all came to visit along with their 11 grandchildren over Christmas and New Year's.

"Our kids are demanding we spend more time to visit the grandkids," Ron said. "They actually did all come here and stayed in our house. I think they come because in the states they come from, they're not allowed to have fireworks. So we have a big display of fireworks."

And the Citizens of the Year for 2011 plan to continue to make sparks in as many areas as they can for a long time to come.

www.clintonchronicle.com

Make the
SMART SWITCH

Get up to
\$500*

in Switch Rewards
when you sign up for
PRTC Wireless

Visit us on Facebook
facebook.com/myPRTC



Why **switch** your
Wireless Service
to **PRTC/AT&T?**

	PRTC Wireless	Other Carriers
Switch Rewards	YES	NO
Fastest 3G Network in Laurens County	YES	NO
Options to bundle with High Speed Internet and/or Home Phone	YES	NO
Local company since 1951	YES	NO
Rollover minutes	YES	NO

PRTC

STORE LOCATION
Shoppes at Walmart
On the Hill

STORE HOURS
Monday - Saturday
9 AM - 7 PM

681-7782
PAY YOUR BILLS ONLINE AT
www.prtcnet.com

*Offer expire 03/31/2011 and are only good for new and existing customers. Receive up to \$500 in rewards when switching wireless service to PRTC from another wireless provider. Receive \$200 for the first line and an additional \$75 per additional line, up to a maximum of 5 lines. Switch Rewards will be issued as a credit to customer's bill. 2-year wireless service agreement is required. Service not available in all areas. All monthly rates exclude applicable taxes and equipment costs. Certain restrictions may apply. See store for details or call 681-7782. PRTC ©2011. All rights reserved.

Think outside the rhombus.

True innovators have been thinking outside the box for a long time. Now we're on to reshaping the box. Expanding the business circles. And reinventing the globe. At AT&T, we put innovative thinking into action for you. We provide solutions to help pull together the physical and intellectual resources you need to turn untapped potential into proven results. Our ever-evolving networking environments will provide you with the cutting-edge thinking you need to reshape your business from everything it already is into all you know it can be.



at&t
Your world. Delivered.