

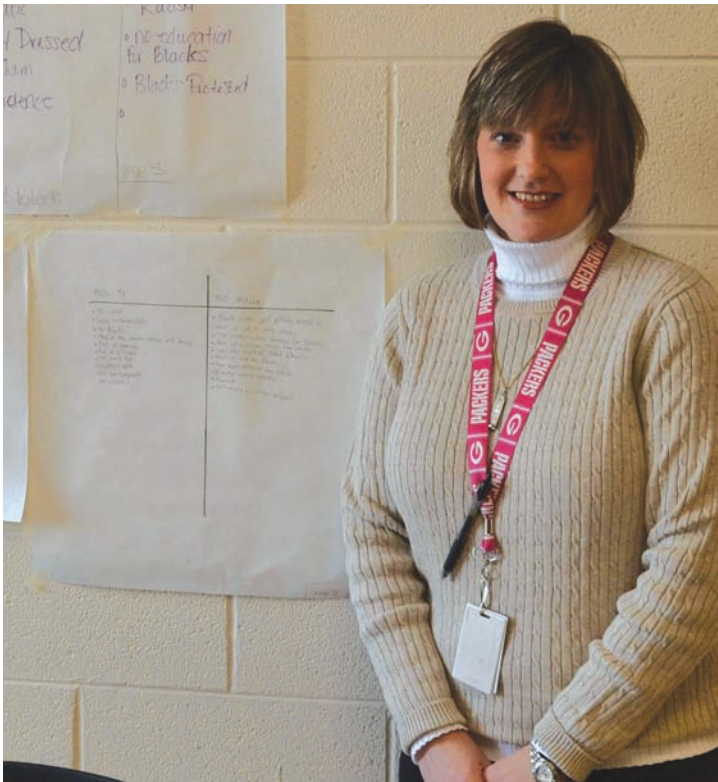


The Devil Tron screen at Clinton High's football home, Wilder Stadium, left, shows a past Red Devil team during a community meeting about a proposed \$8.2 million renovation, all envisioned with private funding; while, right, the City of Clinton installs red banners in celebration of Bell St. Middle's 11 consecutive state championships and Clinton High's five straight titles in SC Science Olympiad.
 --Photos by Vic MacDonald



Learning

The Clinton Chronicle's 2014
 Teacher of the Year is Jennifer Howard
Page 2



Leah
 Lawson
Page 5

Inside

- 2 Jennifer Howard -- 2014 Teacher of the Year
- 3 Carol Ann Barnes
- Kallison Cook
- 4 Nancy Roland
- 5 Joe Benson
- Leah Lawson

Advertisers

- 2 Martha Franks Baptist Retirement Center
- 3 Big Blue Marble Academy
- 4 Laurens County
- 6 Laurens County School District 56
- 7 Clinton Dental Care
- Digestive Disease Group
- Wilson Tractor
- 8 Founders Federal Credit Union

Together

2014 Teacher of the Year: Jennifer Howard

What happens to a dream deferred?
Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore—
And then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over—
like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?

—American author, social activist
Langston Hughes

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

Jennifer Howard, The Clinton Chronicle's 2014 Teacher of the Year, guided her American Literature students through a reading of the American drama "A Raisin in the Sun" as part of an exploration of the 1950s - an era of segregation, civil rights and violent upheavals especially in the South.

"A Raisin in the Sun" takes its name from a line in the Langston Hughes poem printed above - the Harlem Renaissance writer explored, in many literary forms, what happens to people when they cannot, or are not allowed to, reach their full potential.

A District 56 teacher for 15 years, Howard is committed to providing a pathway for all her students to reach their full potential.

"I teach college prep and career readiness students (in English III). I get them to read something they want to read - that is still a work in progress. Hopefully, they will find something they will use again," Howard said.

That process involves reading fiction, of course, but Howard also incorporates non-fiction texts - a process she calls "difficult". Non-fiction can be dry reading, but Howard says students get into it when they realize "it really happened."

For the unit, taught with social studies, on the 1950s, the Clinton High English III students explored Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Howard's classroom has a student-work wall filled with their descriptions of photos from the era, and students' original drawings of their dreams.

The 1950s unit comprises the literature of the time, political environment of the United States, the civil rights struggle and the popular culture of a time some say was "the good old days".

Other reading for the unit included "The Help," a novel about African-American maids of the era and their relationships with the white women they worked for.

The next unit for American Literature will be "Evil Inside Everyone," featuring readings of "The Things They Carry" and "19 Minutes."

For her part, Howard enjoys reading Jodi Picoult, Pat Conroy, John Grisham, Nicholas Spark and Dan Brown. She reads young adult literature to stay current, but it's not a favorite. She does not enjoy science fiction, and the newly-popular vampire literature.

During the summer she reads all the time, and Howard said she has started reading more during the school year because the CHS library has instituted an "empty bookshelf challenge" that tracks teachers' reading.

Howard started her District 56 teaching career at Bell Street Middle School, stayed there a year before transferring to Clinton High and came in with a desire to teach freshmen. She was assigned to teach seniors.

That assignment led to 12 years teaching British Literature, but she wanted a challenge - "There are only so many ways you can teach 'Macbeth'."

"I love working with young people. Many of them lead very adult lives. They think for themselves, and they are excited when given the opportunity," Howard said.



Learning through doing. The Clinton Chronicle's Teacher of the Year Jennifer Howard stands beside a wall display outlining the essential questions of a recent unit on 1950s. Looking at the literature of the era and the civil rights struggle, along with the social culture and political atmosphere of the decade, Howard's English III classes studied American literature along with social studies. - Photo by Vic MacDonald

"I get very frustrated when I hear people say, 'Anyone can teach.' You have to love the age you work with. (Juniors and seniors) have very realistic goals of what they want - college, careers, the niche they fit in."

Now that she has a couple years of teaching American Literature under her belt, Howard does not have to re-read fiction she teaches - "Of Mice and Men," "The Great Gatsby" - but when she does read a book for teaching purposes, she makes notes while reading.

Then, she can review the notes.

It is a skill she refined as an education major at Newberry College, graduating in 1999. Her

husband Tim, from Wisconsin, graduated that year also, he works at Carolina Cryogenics. The Howards have twin girls, Mary Ryan and Kate, age five, who are in pre-school at Clinton Elementary.

"It is exciting watching your own kids learn. They are learning sight words - I never learned sight words. I had to learn and research teaching reading - it definitely has helped my work with struggling readers," Howard said.

Working with the senior experience project at CHS, Howard and her fellow English faculty have helped students in ninth through 11th grades refine their public speaking, creative and research paper-writing skills.

Howard also instructs the Teacher Cadets, a semester course at Clinton High School. "I love teaching. I thought working with young people who think

Howard, Page 8

The Chronicle's Teachers of the Year

1996 Howard Pierce, Clinton Elementary School

1997 Amy Poag, Clinton High School

1998 Elizabeth Crowder, Eastside Elementary School

1999 Cynthia Simmons, Thornwell

2000 Nancy Morgan, Eastside Elementary School

2001 Diane Evans, Clinton High School

2002 Valerie Jones, Thornwell

2003 Paula Pace, Bell Street Middle School

2004 Debbie Green, Eastside Elementary School

2005 Courtney Robertson, Laurens Academy

2006 Prondolyn Copeland, M.S. Bailey Elementary

2007 Hunt Coffey, Martha Dendy Sixth Grade Center

2008 Marjorie Tobias, Clinton Elementary School

2009 Susan Cauble, Joanna-Woodson Elementary

2010 Terri O'Shields, Bell Street Middle School

2011 Erica Coats, Bell Street Middle School

2012 Jenks Howe, Clinton Elementary School

2013 Jennifer Satterwhite, Joanna-Woodson Elementary

2014 Jennifer Howard, Clinton High School



MARTHA FRANKS

Baptist Retirement Community

Martha Franks Drive, Laurens, SC





Patio Homes On Sale in 2014

Entry Fee only \$30,000

Upgraded Renovations!

Residential Living • Assisted Living
Cottages • Patio Homes • Garden Apartments
Alzheimer Care • Short-term Rehab

LIVE BETTER! LIVE WELL! OUR PROMISE!

Call Lisa Yarber for more information on all the available choices

864-984-4541 | 800-849-3307

or visit us online at: www.marthafranks.com



CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE TOUR OR BROCHURE!

Carol Ann Barnes - born to be an educator

By Angela Allsbrook
Horizons 2014

Mrs. Carol Ann Barnes has recently begun her first year as being principal of Eastside Elementary School. Having started this new job in June of 2013, she has been able to easily transition into the position.

Barnes said that she already knew many of the teachers and students from her previous jobs in Laurens School District 56. She taught seventh grade at Martha Dendy Middle School and worked at Bell Street Middle School for the next three years. Barnes was assistant principal at Eastside Elementary School for three years before being transferred to Clinton Elementary School to become the assistant principal. Next, she was principal at M.S. Bailey Elementary School for a year before moving back to Eastside Elementary School. Barnes stated that it was, “Sad to leave the first time and I am happy to be back.” Principal at Clinton Elementary School, Mrs. Nancy Roland had these kind words to say about Barnes, “She is a hard worker, smart, and absolutely loves kids. If you have those things then you will make a great principal.”

Barnes’ mother was a teacher and always said, “Education was always important in our household.” She followed in her mother’s footsteps by majoring in Education in college.

Barnes received her undergraduate degree from Clemson University in Elementary Education. She would then earn her Master’s Degree in Administration from Clemson University. She is now currently working on her PhD in Supervision Administration from the University of South Carolina.



Eastside Elementary principal Carol Ann Barnes grew up in an “education was always important” household, leading her to obtain an education degree in college and working in several positions in District 56. In her first year guiding the students, faculty and staff at Eastside, Barnes said her “not your typical 9-5 job” is ideal for her since “every day is different.” – Photo by Angela Allsbrook

She did note though that she is a hard-core Clemson fan and attends every home football game with her family.

Barnes is happily married to her husband Austin, who is the senior vice president at Arthur State Bank. She has two sons who are both involved in playing football at their schools. Barnes is originally from Anderson, but she has lived in Clinton for the past 18 years with her family. Her husband and children are very supportive of her career choice, even though it can be hard at times because of the crazy hours that she works.

Being a principal is not a normal 9 am-5 pm job. She works until she gets things finished, no matter how long it

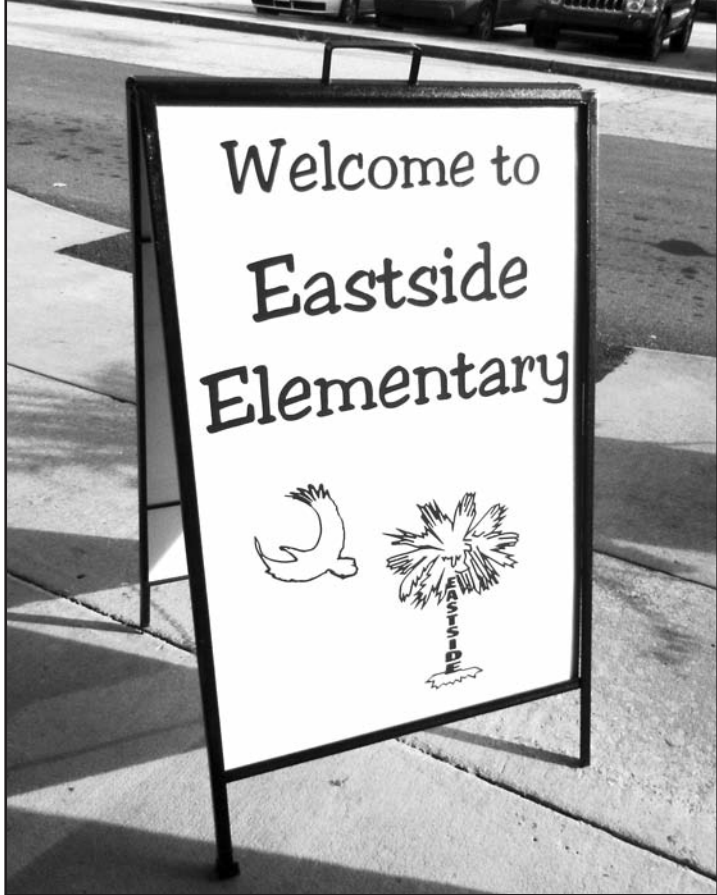
takes her. This means that many times she also works on the weekends. When the teachers are at the school, she helps them first and afterwards she is then able to do her own work.

There is a range of things that she could be doing each day as principal. Barnes said, “There is no typical day, every day is different.” She could be in the classroom doing an informal walk through, helping the students in their classes, covering classes for sick teachers, making sure that the computers are working properly, that the playground is maintained, or disciplining students. Her calendar is always full and she is constantly busy, but it is a “good busy” Barnes said.

Eastside Elementary School

has 450 students ranging from kindergarten to fifth grade. In addition, they have two special needs classes. Twenty teachers work at the school where their class sizes are between twenty to twenty-five students in each. Barnes prefers to keep the class sizes low in order that the students can get either individual or small group attention to help them succeed.

Eastside Elementary School is a Title I school meaning that they receive supplemental services that the state provides. This includes money to support reading and math programs in the classrooms. Out of the three elementary schools in Clinton, Eastside Elementary School has the greatest amount of students that live in poverty.



They also have a high percentage of students who eat free or reduced meals at school. Every student that attends the elementary school is able to receive a free breakfast every morning.

Barnes’ goal for Eastside Elementary School is for it to, “Be a positive, safe, and happy place to come and learn.” She continued by saying that the school needs to be a place where both teachers and students enjoy coming. It is her goal to set that climate at the elementary school.

As of now, the students have very high test scores and they also have high achievement. Barnes plans to maintain this success and to continue to push the students forward academically.

Another thing that Barnes would like to do as principal of Eastside Elementary School is to develop a vision of where she would like the school to be in the future. She wants this vi-

sion to be a shared vision between the school, the district, and the parents. Barnes said, “I am not a leader by myself, I work with the people here to lead. We are all leaders in our own way. We all have different talents and abilities. When we can recognize the strengths of everybody, we can use those more effectively to better our school and our students.”

In addition, Barnes said that since she is in her first year as principal, she would like to be observant of the school and its students to have a feel for their needs before she decides to do things differently.

Barnes hopes to be principal at Eastside Elementary School for a while. She does not wish to have a position with the district where she is removed from the day-to-day contact with the children at the school. Barnes said, “I have enjoyed being principal. I have had no regrets at all.”

Kallison Cook



Two good friends. Kallison Cook, left, Clinton High Homecoming Queen 2013, was crowned last October by her good friend, Kelsey Davis, the 2012 Homecoming Queen. Cook is waiting on her acceptance letter from the University of South Carolina, while Davis is a student at Lander University, Greenwood. - Photo by Vic MacDonald

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

Kallison Cook has lived in the Clinton area all her life. This fall, she will be ready for a new location, new people and new challenges ahead.

Cook will graduate from Clinton High School having succeeded in maintaining her GPA despite – or perhaps, because of – her involvement in a long list of student activities, working and generally looking out for others.

“I like to take care of people,” the CHS Homecoming Queen, cheerleader, HOSA and honor so-

cieties member and Zaxby’s employee said.

Cook is on the lookout for an acceptance letter from the University of South Carolina. She wants to major in biology with an aim toward pre-med; she may become a pediatrician or emergency room doctor.

The CHS senior who lives in Joanna and has come up through the District 56 schools says math is her favorite subject, although she concedes an interest in history. It seems almost any subject and activity at CHS is not beyond her reach.

She is a Beta Club and National Honor Society member, is

involved in Youth in Government, works with HOSA, the health occupations organization, and she cheers for football and basketball. She and the CHS cheerleading squad saw the varsity football team through a rough start to the 2013 season, only to follow them to a second round playoff game on a dismal, rainy evening at Daniel, which played for the state championship.

“I had faith in them,” Cook says of schoolmates on the football team. “They had to fix some things. When they did, they shocked a lot of people.”

Cook, Page 8

Pictured Below
BBMA's
SC First Steps
4K Class of 2014

Serving Infants - Afterschoolers

- SC First Steps 4K class
- Creative Curriculum
- Baby Signs for Infants – Toddlers
- Spanish Enrichment Classes Provided Weekly
- Technology
- Meals and Menus Follow CACFP Guidelines
- Outside Enrichments Offered
- Afterschool
- Music & Art

Preparing our Children for the 21st Century

888 Springdale Drive, Clinton (864) 938-1100 www.BBMAcademy.com

Nancy Roland -- principal with servant’s heart

By Angela Allsbrook
Horizons 2014

Mrs. Nancy Roland has not always been principal of Clinton Elementary School. She first started teaching physical education at both Joanna-Woodson Elementary School and M.S. Bailey Elementary School and did that for 12 years.

Next, she served as an administrative intern for one year and then became the Parenting Literacy Coordinator for the district for the next 12 years. Then, she was the director of the 4K Program at M. S. Bailey Child Development Center for five years.

Currently Roland is in her second year as principal of Clinton Elementary School. She said that she is still getting her “feet wet” in the position, but that hopefully she will be able to see the fruit of her labor within the next year.

From an outsider’s perspective, all of the hard work that Roland has already put into the school is very visible. Walking down the hallway with her, every teacher or staff member that passed by needed her to help them with something and every student would run up and give her a big hug.

The teachers, staff, and students all need Roland to lead the school in the right direction. It was obvious that the school would not be running as smoothly if they did not have such a great leader in place as principal.

Originally, Roland had no intention of becoming a principal at all. By attending Lander University, she received her undergraduate degree and then went to Winthrop University for an administrative degree. Lastly, she earned her master’s degree from the University of South Carolina-Upstate in elementary education.

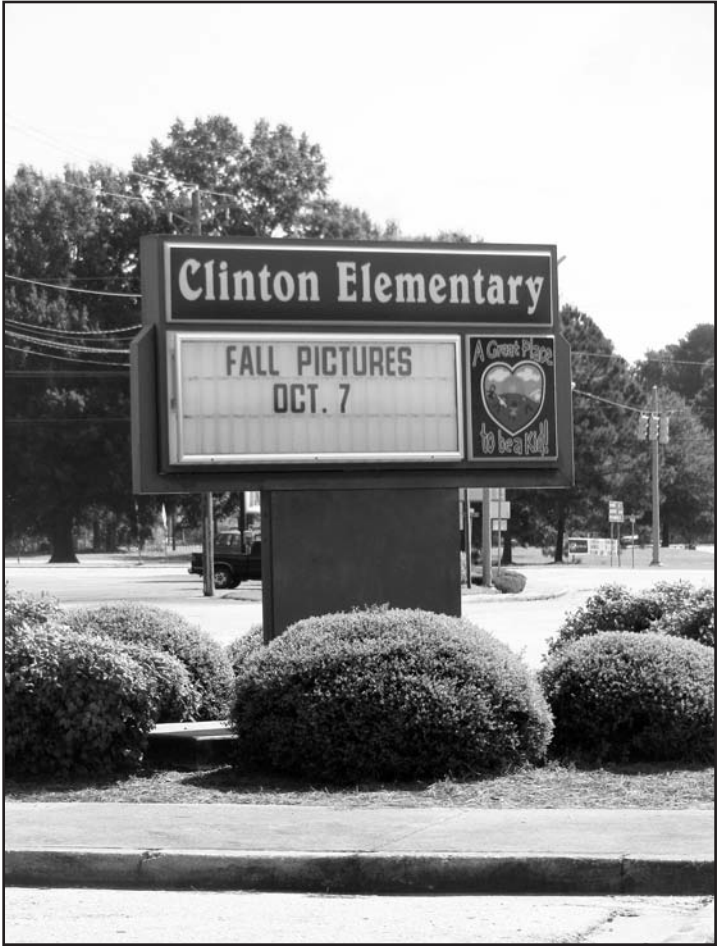
One of the reasons she was wary about becoming principal was because she did not want to have to interact with parents. People would tell her that parents are like monsters, you never want to have to deal with them. However, once she actually became principal, she realized that parents are not monsters at all; you just have to know how to communicate with them. Both principal and parents want the same thing: for the child to succeed and be happy at school.

“Bloom where you are planted” is a saying that Roland is trying to live up to. After she was placed at Clinton Elementary School, she did realize that she personally needed to grow.

In addition, new leadership would in turn lead to new ideas to improve the school. She thinks of herself as being on a mission field to make a difference in a person’s life and she strives to serve the community



Clinton Elementary principal Nancy Roland shares a not-so-serious moment with a group of students at the school she serves. “I believe you take care of the children first, the staff first, and the parents first. ... A principal is a servant leader,” she said. – Photos by Angela Allsbrook



she has always lived in. Mrs. Roland said she plans to, “Make a mark on the future, the future that I am not even going to be here to see.” You do not know what will actually stick with a child when you are teaching them until later in life when they become mature members of society trying to make a difference.

It was a very natural transition for Roland to become principal of the elementary school since she already knew many of the children and their families. She said that she feels like a grandmother to them because she had already taught or

coached many of the students’ parents. The relationship with them was already there and she continues to see them out in the community at places such as Dempsey’s and Whiteford’s.

Roland was asked to tell about what a typical day in the life of an elementary school principal is like. She quickly answered that there is no typical day, that she always has intentions of getting things done on her to-do list, but things always come up.

One of her good friends is Brenda Romines, who preceded Roland at Clinton Elementary and is now principal at

Bell Street Middle. Romines said, “People over paper,” a quote that really hit home with Roland.

“I believe you take care of the children first, the staff first, and the parents first... You have to meet the needs of the people that you serve. A principal is a servant leader,” Roland said.

She said that she is the middle child in her family and that is most likely where her servant leadership personality trait comes from. Roland will do her

very best to make everyone happy. These are all perfect characteristics of a great principal.

As principal, Roland does not have the regular 9 am-5 pm work schedule. There is so much more that goes into the job besides being at the school. She works most Saturday and Sunday nights and receives late night phone calls during the week from teachers needing advice on how to teach a subject differently or expressing concern for a child.

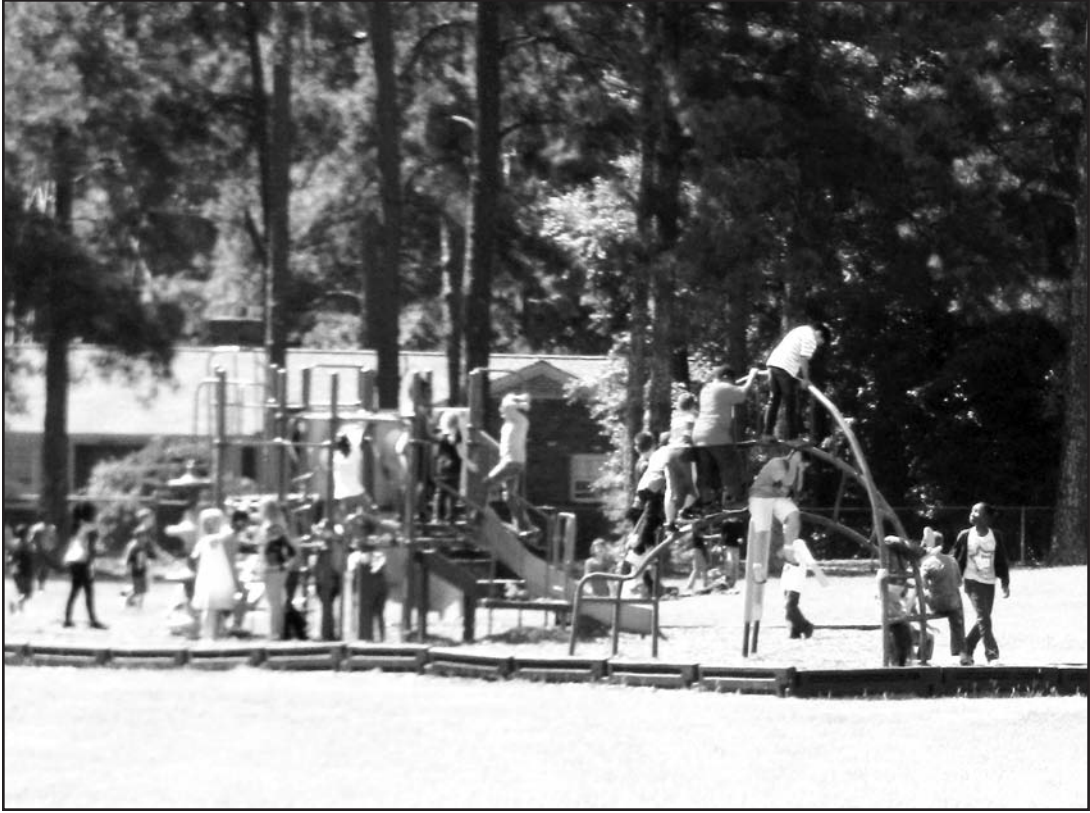
Being a principal does have an effect on the Roland family. Her husband, who is semi-retired, has evolved into Mr. Mom. Her son and daughter, who both attend Clinton High School, play sports and Roland takes time in her busy schedule to go see her children’s games. With that being said, the Roland family understands that this is all part of what their mom does for a living, and they respect that.

Clinton Elementary School is the largest elementary school in the district by having 659 students ranging from kindergarten to 5th Grade. When Roland was asked to tell about the demographics of the children who attend the school she politely replied, “It doesn’t matter whether you are rich or poor, black, white, or hispanic, that all doesn’t matter, you are just a child.” She does not view her students as a statistic; she views them as individuals who have the full potential to be able to learn and grow.

At the conclusion of the interview, Roland was asked what her personal educational philosophy is. She said that it is very important to “Do what you like, like what you do.” If you do not enjoy your career, then you are not able to serve the people that you interact with, she said.

Education is the key to success that will help you reach whatever goal you may have. Roland said elementary school is the foundation and that in kindergarten you have to learn how to read to then be able to function in life.

Roland has a wonderful heart for these children and it will be inspiring to see where these children go in life after gaining their knowledge foundation from Clinton Elementary School.



Faculty and staff at Clinton Elementary are charged with looking after their young students at all times, especially during their recess times outside on the school’s playground – a place for physical fitness and getting re-energized for the day’s schoolwork.

Laurens County

SOUTH CAROLINA

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Airport | 3985 Torrington Road | Phone: 864-682-9620 |
| Animal Control | 3 Catherine Street | Phone: 864-984-6812 |
| 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 |

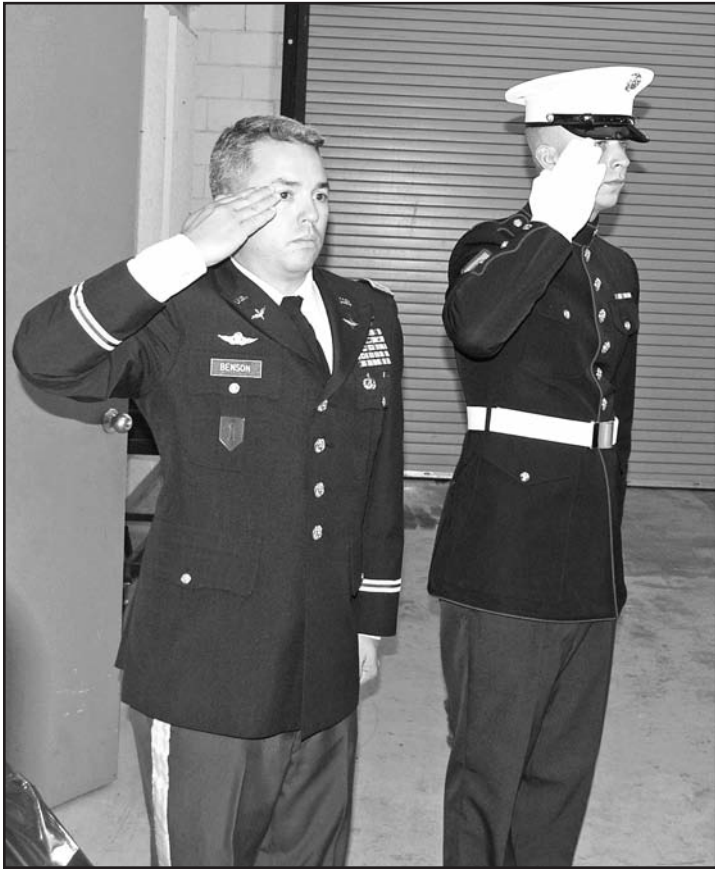
www.laurenscountysc.org

Joe Benson - developing leaders at Clinton High

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

Going “above and beyond the call of duty,” Clinton High School JROTC is fulfilling a national curriculum obligation to perform one service learning project this year by completing five projects before the 2013-14 academic session is completed.

Cadets are assisted in their service to the community by new-to-the-program commander Major Joe Benson and veteran Sgt. Jeff Heath. Benson’s official



Saluting the colors. Joe Benson salutes the American Flag, presented during a lunch meeting, by the Clinton High School JROTC Color Guard. The lunch, at the Clinton National Guard Armory, was for mobility impaired hunters, many of them veterans of the nation’s military services, being taken deer hunting by Laurens and Newberry counties landowners.

retirement date from the United States Army was Jan. 31, 2014; he was “officially retired” five days from the Army at the time of this interview (Feb. 5).

Benson had so much accumulated leave time he was able to join CHS JROTC last summer and launch his “second career” with the Red Devil Cadets. Benson moved his family from Elgin - what he calls their “retirement community” - to accept the Clinton High position.

His wife Farrah is the preschool autism class teacher at MS Bailey Child Development Center, this is the first year for the class in District 56. Farrah Benson has a graduate-level degree in working with children with autism.

“Alice in Wonderland” in production now at The Gilliam Center, Thornwell Home for Children.

Hunter Benson was a State Meet qualifier in cross-country, running for the high school team as a seventh grader; softball is next on her sports radar. Donovan was JV football quarterback, and the varsity QB backup.

The Bensons married in 1995 - “we went to the prom together,” Major Benson said - and embarked on the move-all-the-time life of an Army family.

The family did “stay put” 26 months one time - Joe Benson was deployed in Iraq most of that time. Now, he says, they are settled.

Of his wife, Joe Benson says proudly, “Now she can really get started on her career. I got my job because of her.”

Before landing in Clinton, it was Army life all the way for Benson. He enlisted at 17 and became an engineer - “crawling in the mud, falling out of airplanes, all the cool stuff,” he said - then 10 years in, he was assigned to flight school. Benson learned to fly Black Hawk helicopters, and became an officer.

“Our family has not spent a Christmas in one place more than once,” he said. They plan to stay in Clinton through December (and much longer) and 2014 will be their second consecutive Christmas in the same town.

“This is my second career and I am very fortunate to have found it,” Benson said. “Cadet Command had to do waivers to make it happen and Col. Rexford had to be OK with it. Up until this past Friday, I was still in the Army.”

Benson says now-retired CHS JROTC Commander Col. Joel Rexford and Heath have formed a solid program at Clinton High. He said everywhere he goes in Clinton, when someone sees him in uniform or a distinctive red JROTC shirt, “they tell me about their time in JROTC, or what the program did for them,” he said.

Their four children - Donovan, Mike, Hunter and Morgan - have dived into everything Clinton. All four are involved in the Laurens County Community Theater’s



Retired, officially. Major Joe Benson stands beside his official United States Army retirement plaque (left, lower) showing he has been retired from the Army five days when this photo was taken (Feb. 5). His retirement date was Jan. 31, 2014; Benson had enough accumulated leave to apply for and accept the Clinton High School JROTC command position before his official retirement date. - Photos by Vic MacDonald

In fact, CHS JROTC has done so much for so many people under Rexford’s and Heath’s guidance that Benson gets a constant request - “Can you do this for us? You always have.”

Which brings up the service learning projects. CHS JROTC cadets are volunteering at MS Bailey. After conducting research on special needs education, they were at the school two weeks ago to work with any teachers or students who needed them.

Another group is working with Langston House - it’s the Grand Friend Project, the kind of work where the cadets come in and say,

“what can we do?” Benson said.

Another group serves as trainers for the CHS Special Olympians. Another group fulfills the unit’s Adopt-a-Highway obligation, on Ring Road bordering the campus; they also have conducted environmental research.

Another group will place American flags on the graves of veterans at Rosemont Cemetery, just a short march from the CHS campus. That is a long-standing CHS JROTC obligation.

This May it will happen with a twist. Cadets are mapping out the cemetery, identifying each veteran’s grave, and writing down

facts about each serviceman honored there. They want to compile a booklet for the cemetery.

“These are all student-led projects,” Benson said. “They’ve briefed me and Sgt. Heath and Mrs. Tiller (CHS principal Maureen Tiller). They (the groups’ leaders) make sure all the students are engaged. Service learning is part of our annual inspection. We have to do one (project), we are doing five, simultaneously.

“The cadets identify the need, they answer the questions - how does this address a community need?”

Along the way, leadership happens.

Benson is revamping the unit’s leadership development by stressing a calendar year (rather than an academic year) change of command. He aims to open up more leadership roles to more cadets, eventually having two graduating senior Battalion Commanders and two other graduating senior Battalion Executive Officers.

“More people will have more opportunities to shine,” he said. Benson adds studies of JROTC have shown a reason many students drop out is the lack of leadership opportunities - “If you’re not in charge, you’re following.”

“Our National Mission is to motivate young people to be better citizens,” Benson said. “It can only help them down the road.”

Along with service learning and leadership development, before the CHS academic year ends JROTC will have its Military Ball (March 28), stage a spring run and conduct a second semester awards banquet.

“It’s a little busy right now,” Benson said. “The school year flies by quick.”

Personally, the commander also has an education goal in sight. Ten years after he graduated high school, Benson started college - on an Army Green to Gold

Benson, Page 7

Leah Lawson sets her sights on Miss America

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

In two days, Leah Lawson takes a first step in a journey of a decade. Feb. 28 - March 1 she joined the best and brightest young women in South Carolina at the Miss SC Pageant workshop.

A Palmetto Princess for eight years growing up, Lawson now is Miss Laurens County, and she carries with her to this summer’s Miss South Carolina Scholarship Pageant the hopes of an entire county. She is the quintessential Laurens County woman.

Educated in Laurens schools, a graduate of Laurens District 55 High School. Daughter of the Raiders football coach.

A junior at Presbyterian College, majoring in chemistry. And originally from Union, Laurens County’s neighbor to the east. Now, she carries the banner of a revitalized Miss Laurens County program.

Miss Laurens County is the home pageant of 2012 Miss South Carolina Ali Rogers, who went onto Las Vegas and the title of Miss America First Runner-up. The Clemson second semester senior still makes appearances throughout the state - in March she will be a guest speaker in Lugoff at the state Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Miss Laurens County 2013 Erin Frost went on to a Top 10 finish at Miss South Carolina. She is a Wofford women’s basketball player, having already graduated.

Now, it’s Leah Lawson’s turn. “I really want to win,” she said. “I want to win Miss South Carolina. I want to be Miss America.”

But simple “want to” is hardly enough. Miss America is a very rare combination of beauty - outer and inner - talent, drive, scholarship and physical



“Our girl” in Miss South Carolina. A junior chemistry major at Presbyterian College, Leah Lawson of Laurens, will represent the community as Miss Laurens County, competing in the Miss South Carolina Pageant. Lawson said the chance to earn scholarship money and advance her platform - breast cancer awareness - led her to advance in the Miss South Carolina organization, after she had been a Palmetto Princess for eight years. - Stephanie Neale Photography, Spartanburg, SC

fitness. Lawson’s work with a trainer is a personal challenge - the trainer gives the workout idea, Lawson has to have the mental toughness to do workouts on her own.

This summer, that will mean running while she is in England. Lawson travels to Europe in late May and June - the Miss South Carolina Pageant will be June 28. Contestants have to be in Columbia working on “pageant stuff” a week before that.

“While I am running in England,” Lawson says, “I will be

thinking how I want to represent America one day.”

That thought, she says, will keep her mental edge sharp.

In addition to her Palmetto Princess days, Lawson was Miss Laurens County Teen. In that competition she was an Irish river-dancer - she performed that dance style for 13 years. “But I haven’t danced in four years,” she said.

Everyone just assumes Miss South Carolina can sing, but many contestants just can’t, Lawson said. State and national

pageants are filled with dancers, fitness demonstrations, instrumental performances, even the occasional yodelling.

For Miss South Carolina, Lawson plans to stick with her Miss Laurens County talent - she sang the smoky Etta James soul/blues classic “At Last.”

“If it’s not broke, don’t fix it,” says Lawson, who used the song to win talent at the Miss Laurens County competition, where she also won fitness.

“I didn’t even have a bathing suit,” she said.

Conceding “I am on a budget,” Lawson said most of her Miss Laurens County outfits were borrowed. Her talent dress “popped a seam, but I fixed it.” Now, in preparation for Miss South Carolina, she has to shop.

On a recent weekend shopping trip to Greer, her good-sport Palmetto Prince, Isaac Fowler, her nephew, went along as chaperone. Her three Palmetto Princesses are Sydney Dunlap, Bailey Burns and Mary Alice Boone.

Lawson has young contestants following her on Instagram and Twitter. “I love mentoring and being with them,” she said.

Lawson also has introduced pageantry to some of her friends - Miss Laurens County was their first pageant to attend. They realized, she said, a pageant is “more than looking pretty on stage.”

At the Miss South Carolina and Miss America Pageants there are on-stage questions, often challenging for spur-of-the-moment answering. A Miss America judge asked Rogers if sportscaster Brett Musberger should have said Alabama quarterback AJ McCarron’s girlfriend, model Katherine Webb, is attractive - and during a nationally televised game, he said it over and over and over.

Rogers said Webb is an attractive woman - why shouldn’t that be an observation made during the game? Later, Rogers said



OUCH! No, Leah Lawson’s not really poking herself in the eye, but she is channeling her inner Sidney Rice in this sidelines shot from PC’s Bailey Memorial Stadium. The daughter of former LDHS head football coach Greg Lawson, she was used to hanging with the football coaches and closely following the Raiders team. To get back that interest, she began working with the Blue Hose football program, and has done so the past three seasons. - Photo by Vic MacDonald

she was glad she (co-anchor of Clemson’s Tiger football TV show) got the questions; the other contestants couldn’t have answered it, Rogers said, because they had been kept away from TV and cell phones for a week.

Only Rogers’ football background allowed her to know

who AJ McCarron, Katherine Webb and Brent Murberger are.

Leah Lawson can only hope she gets a football question, too - even if it is more “pop culture” than Xs and Os on a coach’s whiteboard.

Lawson, Page 7

Laurens County School District

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



We will:

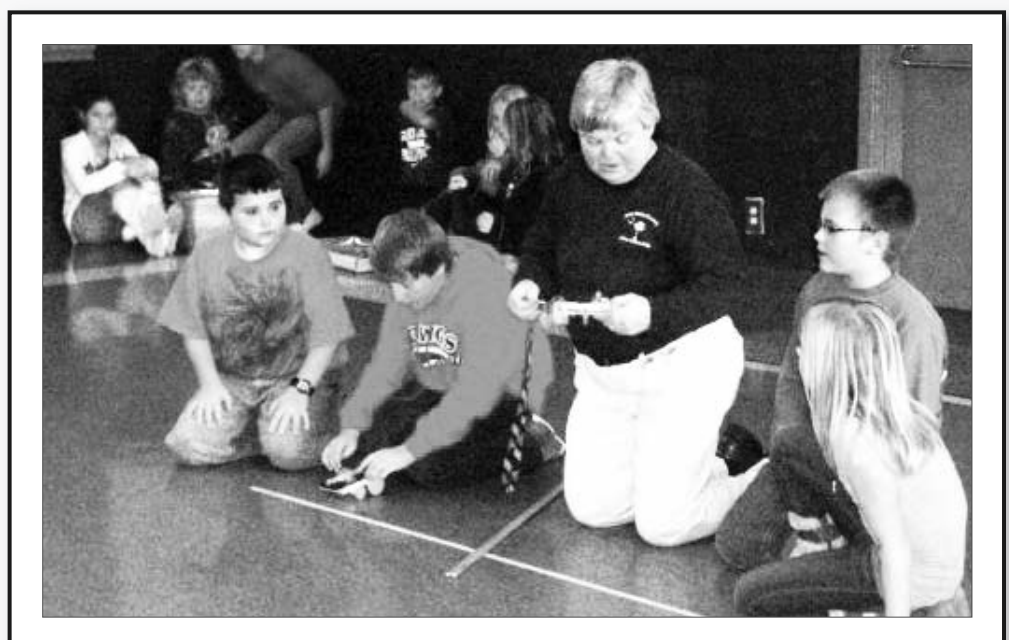
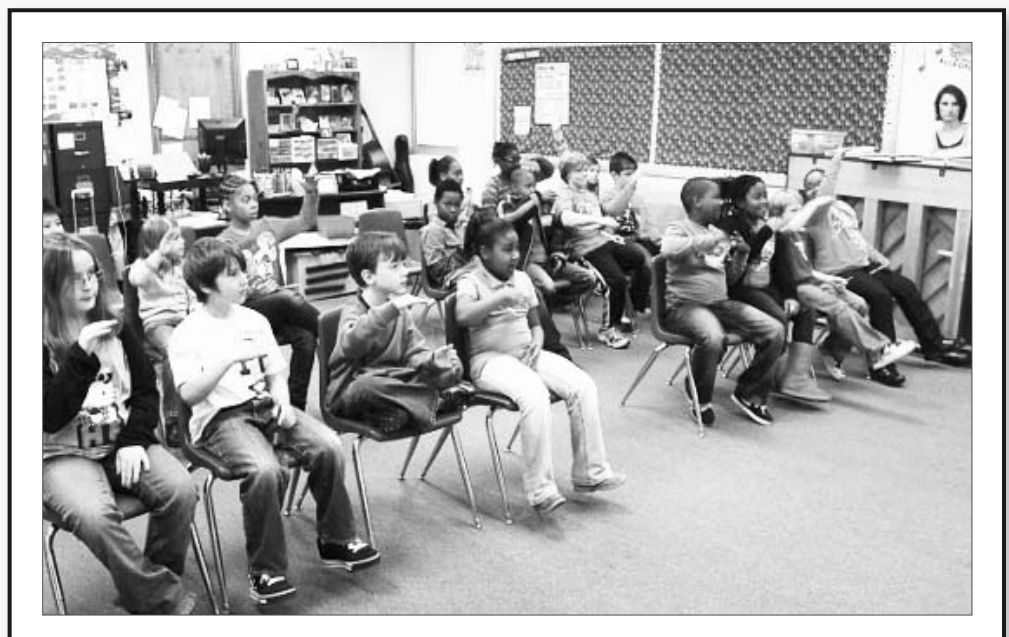
- Promote and develop an environment of student learning, collaboration, and professional growth.
- Elevate the academic performance of every student at each level.
- Integrate resources and technology tools to support learning
- Improve stakeholder communication and support of public education.

~ Constancy of Purpose ~

All students will graduate from high school.

211 N. Broad Street - Suite B
Clinton, South Carolina 29325
864-833-0800
www.lcsd56.org

Dr. David O'Shields, Ph.D., Superintendent





Clinton Dental Care

Kristin R. Derrick, DMD

COSMETIC AND GENERAL DENTISTRY FOR ALL AGES

NEW PATIENTS WELCOME

864-833-5400

203 Jacobs Highway, Clinton, SC 29325
www.clintondentalcare.com



Experience Does Matter...

Excellence in Gastrointestinal Healthcare

We are Board Certified Gastroenterologists providing exceptional care in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of digestive system diseases. We are the only Lakeland's area licensed and accredited GI outpatient facility. The Greenwood Endoscopy Center offers a safe, comfortable, easily accessible environment for Colonoscopy and Upper Endoscopy

at about one-fourth the cost of a traditional hospital outpatient setting. Over 11,000 procedures performed last year! We believe our community and surrounding areas deserve the best - make sure you ask your physician for a referral to Digestive Disease Group for your screening or diagnostic colonoscopy, upper endoscopy or other GI related care!

103 Liner Drive, Professional Park, Greenwood
www.digestivediseasegroup.com | 864-227-3636, 864-227-3838



Send-off gifts. An eagle trophy and model helicopter are retirement gifts Major Joe Benson received upon leaving the Army. The trophy is inscribed to "Coach" Benson because he has coached travel softball teams, and uses coaching strategies in dealing with people in his command, and now with JROTC cadets at Clinton High School. - Photo by Vic MacDonald

Benson

From Page 5

scholarship - earning a bachelors degree in social science, with history concentration, from Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C., a 3,000-student school. He is working on a masters in education with a concentration in counseling. "We do a lot of counseling here," he said; granted, it's not formal, clinical counseling - a lot of it is listening. "That's why it is so awesome

to come into this program," Benson said. "It is a slice of this school, of this community - it's built that way. We have athletes, cheerleaders, Beta Club members, the director of the Gospel Choir, we have eighth graders from ISA along with ninth through 12th graders, all interacting together - this is a participation class." Young people new to the class can "hang back" for a little while but, basically, Benson said, "You step in - you go." Sgt. Heath makes sure the

cadets know one thing for sure - the Junior Reserve Officers Training program is a no-excuse zone, Benson said. "There is no reason you cannot come in here and get involved." It's all about personal responsibility - the lesson of a gun. What is the maximum effective range of a weapon? Every soldier knows it for every weapon - it's a matter of meters. What is the maximum effective range of an excuse? Zero meters.

Lawson

From Page 5

For three years, Lawson has worked with the Presbyterian College football office. She attended the PC recruiting banquet recently and will ramp up her work with football again in the spring, as the Blue Hose Spring Game approaches.

All the football coaches and players on campus will be rooting for her to win Miss South Carolina this summer, she said. "They are very supportive, especially (head coach) Harold Nichols," she said. "When I graduated Laurens, I was the coach's (Greg Lawson) daughter. I had eaten lunch with the football coaches. When I started

at PC, something was missing. "I wanted that football family, I have really enjoyed working with them the last three years (Lawson is a second-semester junior). PC is a big family, that's what I love about it. What we have here, I want to spread it throughout the state. "South Carolina is a big family."



Wilson Tractor, Inc.

440 Wilson Rd.
Newberry, SC 29108
(803) 276-1151



*\$0 down, 0% A.P.R. financing for up to 60 months on purchases of new Kubota BX, B, L, M, TLB and ZP, DM, RA and TE Hay Tools equipment is available to qualified purchasers from participating dealers' in-stock inventory through 3/31/2014. Example: A 60-month monthly installment repayment term at 0% A.P.R. requires 60 payments of \$16.67 per \$1,000 financed. 0% A.P.R. interest is available to customers if no dealer documentation preparation fee is charged. Dealer charge for document preparation fee shall be in accordance with state laws. Inclusion of ineligible equipment may result in a higher blended A.P.R. Not available for Rental, National Accounts or Governmental customers. 0% A.P.R. and low-rate financing may not be available with customer instant rebate offers. Financing is available through Kubota Credit Corporation, U.S.A., 3401 Del Amo Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503, subject to credit approval. Some exceptions apply. Offer expires 3/31/2014. See us for details on these and other low-rate options or go to www.kubota.com for more information.



© Kubota Tractor Corporation, 2014

More About Jennifer Howard
2014 Teacher of the Year

I am a proud graduate of Clinton High School. After graduating from CHS in 1995, I attended Newberry College, where I earned my BA in English Education. I began my career in 1999 by teaching eighth grade language arts at Bell Street Middle School. One year later, I moved "home" to CHS! Over the course of the last fourteen years, I have taught various courses in the English Department. In 2013, I successfully renewed my National Board Certification. I am also the Teacher Cadet instructor.

I met my husband, Tim, while in college. We are celebrating our fourteenth wedding anniversary. I am also the proud mother of twin daughters, Mary Ryan and Kate, that are now five-years-old. When I am not at work, I love spending time with my family!

— From Jennifer Howard’s CHS Webpage, which also includes a recommended reading list of books

Howard

From Page 2

they want to teach would be fun," Howard said. "When I graduated from Clinton High, the class did not exist. I wish it had - it's a crash course, in two-week segments, on what takes to be a teacher. They spend five to six weeks in a real classroom." District 56 teachers have been

"phenomenal" working with the Teacher Cadets, Howard said. "We have great, great teachers in the elementary and middle schools," she said. "The Cadets really do learn good things." Many Cadets, Howard said, use their late arrival/early dismissal time to go back to the schools to help out. Many times, the Cadets are assigned to small groups of students for differenti-

ated instruction, and they see first-hand "the light come on" when a child learns a new skill. "When their kids see their Cadet in McDonalds, they think they're famous," Howard said. Teachers are not famous; in fact, Howard said she seeks to cultivate a humanistic relationship with her young people. "Teachers are just normal people. I tell them I love to read, but

I also like football - I will watch the Super Bowl - I watch soap operas and reality TV. I shop. "I try to be as human as I can with them." And Jennifer Howard actually had a "dream deferred" opportunity in her life. Graduating college, as the student body president, she interviewed at Milliken and concedes she was "five minutes away" from taking a junior executive position. "I would be making what I'm making now, right out of college,"

she said. When it came time to yes or no the job offer, sitting across a table from the interviewer, she asked for time to think about it. The interviewer was surprised - what's to think about? He asked her if she had a boyfriend, she said she was engaged and then realized - maybe I need to ask (her fiance, eventually her husband). The interviewer said, "I can give you three days." Howard decided no, she did

not want to be a junior executive. She was, at heart, a teacher. She told her parents, Ginger and Rut Jacks of Clinton, "I can be a teacher and if I don't like it I can go back to Milliken," not realizing - as a 20-something-year-old - the "dream job" would not be waiting for her. So, what happens when a dream is not deferred? Jennifer Howard is an example of what happens when a dream is fulfilled.

Cook

From Page 2

Connected with the school and outside of school, Cook is a CHAMPS student, a YPD member at Antioch AME Church, coaches cheerleaders at the Clinton Y and, oh yes, there's that job at Zaxby's in Laurens, where she is a crew leader. When academics come first, "I tell my manager I can't work as much," she said. Cook wants to work 20 hours a week, it's at 13-14 now as the academic year enters second semester. The key to grades - "My GPA has not dropped these past two years," Cook says - and activities is time management. Also, her job allows Cook the chance to exercise her leadership skills, and she knows how to bandage injuries her co-workers might have on the job. "I like the thought of taking care of people," Cook said. Cook draws inspiration from her mom, Deanna Bluford; they live together in Joanna, Cook grew up in Mountville. She has three sisters on her dad's side, and an interesting extended family. "My grandmother had two generations of kids," she said. "(The younger uncles and aunts) are like my brothers and sisters." Her aunt, Shay Bluford - "she is awesome," Cook says - provides a role model. "I watched her when I was in elementary school, she was in high school," Cook said. "She went to PC, she's in school now, she is an RN. (At CHS) she was student body president." This past fall, Cook and her boyfriend got a taste of USC life attending football games at Williams-Brice. The atmosphere was electric - "Everybody was excited to be there," Cook said. She concedes she will miss Clinton High. "I'll miss the people. I've known everybody, basically, forever," she said. "(However) I'm ready to see my new life." Cook said she will come back to CHS - she has one commitment, at least, crowning the 2014 Homecoming Queen. She wasn't expecting to win this past fall - "Everybody was a good candidate. All of us are involved" in school activities, Cook said. CHS Homecoming Queen is voted on by the student body, "except the eighth graders," Cook said. The 2013-14 school year - Cook's last as a current Red Devil before becoming an alumni Red Devil - ends in early June. The day, she said, will be "really sad, I don't want it to end."



A time before their time. Clinton High School English III students produced reflections of the 1950s as a unit in American Literature and social studies of the decade marked by segregation, violence and the struggle for civil rights. The unit was timed for Black History Month and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. Students also wrote and drew their versions of King's "I Have a Dream" speech. -- Photo by Vic MacDonald

relax...with Founders.

Loyalty Dividend • Founders Online • Founders Mobile
Free Checking with eStatements¹ • Platinum Visa
Visa Debit Card with CUREwards®² • Loans for all Reasons
Access to over 30,000 surcharge-free ATMs³
Investment Services⁴
Call Financial Consultant Derek Hawk
to schedule your no cost consultation at 1-864-342-4425.
Insurance Services⁵
Home & Auto • Life • Health • Long Term Care
Call Insurance Services Manager Michael Faile
at 1-800-845-1614 to schedule your FREE consultation.

Visit us in Laurens County at:
24543 Hwy. 76 East
Clinton
1307 West Main Street
Laurens

FOUNDERS
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
foundersfcu.com
1-800-845-1614

Federally insured by NCUA.

¹ Requires credit evaluation. Teens under the age of 18 are required to have an adult sign as joint owner. Accounts without eStatements will be charged \$2 for periodic statements by mail.
² Refer to Visa Debit CUREwards® brochure for details.
³ Surcharge fees may apply when Founders Visa Debit or ATM Card is used outside of the CO-OP ATM network or at non-Founders owned ATMs.
⁴ Securities and investment advisory services offered through Cetera Advisor Networks LLC, Member FINRA/SIPC - Founders Federal Credit Union, Founders Financial Group, LLC and Founders Insurance Services are not affiliated with Cetera Advisor Networks. Investment Services is a department of Founders Federal Credit Union. Registered Sales Branch located at 1307 Bolling Springs Road, Spartanburg, SC 29303.
⁵ These products offered through Founders Financial Group, LLC, doing business as Founders Insurance Services. Insurance products not underwritten by Founders Financial Group, LLC, or any affiliated company.
Not NCUA Insured - No Credit Union Guarantee - May Lose Value - Not Deposits - Not Insured by any Federal Government Agency.