



The City of Clinton sign is illuminated, above, and the Young Professionals Organization of Laurens County Chamber of Commerce, a two-time National Chamber of the Year, has a tent at Presbyterian College's Bailey Memorial Stadium, below center, as signs of a community coming together for the common good of all citizens. -- Photo by Vic MacDonald

Working

The Clinton Chronicle's 2014
Citizen of the Year is Rev. Herb Codington
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newcomer to local politics

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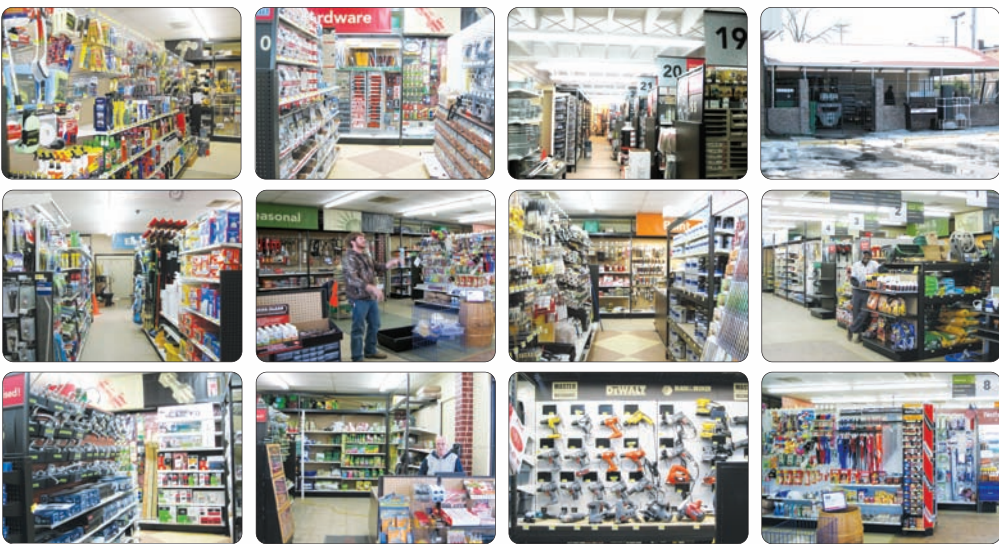
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Rev. Herb Codington -- 2014 Citizen of the Year

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

For Rev. Herb Codington, the take home message of the New Testament is simple. Christ came not to be served, but to serve.

People who consider themselves followers of Christ, therefore, are servants at heart. From the time he was born and raised in Korea to today's mission as spiritual leader of Bethany Presbyterian Church near Clinton, Codington has followed that servant message.

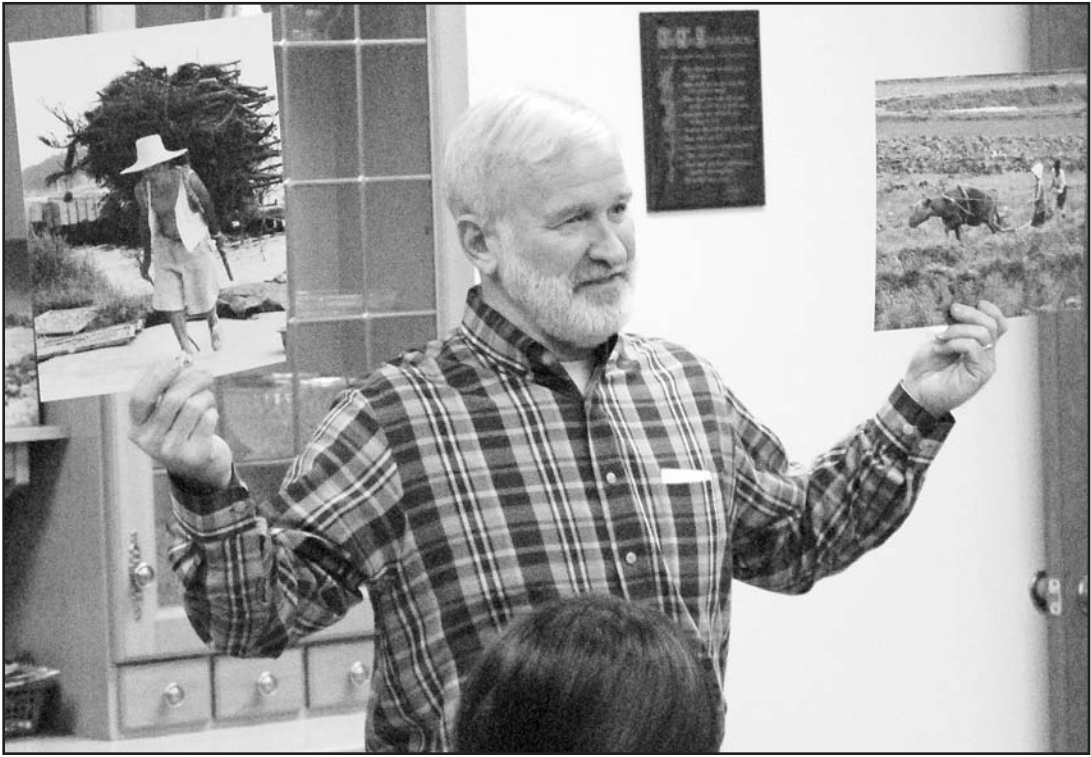
For his long-standing efforts on behalf of the Clinton community, Laurens County and Presbyterian College, and mission work in the Caribbean island nation of Haiti, Codington is The Clinton Chronicle's 2014 Citizen of the Year.

It is an honor he deflects. "I am surrounded by people who give their best, my wife foremost among them. If I don't, I get left behind," Codington said, modestly.

He and wife Suzan met while students at Presbyterian College; she is a linguist, a languages tutor and musician. Suzan also has international roots, she was born in Brazil, similar to Codington's roots in Korea where his parents were medical missionaries. The couple has five grown children.

Codington has been involved with Bethany Presbyterian Church since the 1970s. The church building's rural location makes it ideal for Scouting camp-outs and summer "get away from the city" camps, even if it is off the beaten track, east of Clinton.

"Churches are like anything," Codington said. "The universal church will endure forever. The expressions of that church are different, the populations are different. We have a great site for Scouting and youth activities," so while there has been discussion about relocating, those dis-



The Haiti experience. Rev. Herb Codington, The Clinton Chronicle's Citizen of the Year for 2014, has been part of several mission teams traveling to the United States' Caribbean neighbor, Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the world, through Mission Possible. "My dad loved pioneer medicine - no technology. He loved to go where there was no medicine and start from scratch," Codington said. - Photos by Vic MacDonald

cussions never gained traction.

Bethany is a church that rose from the dead. Founded in 1833, the church was disbanded after 100 years, and its location vacated for 10 years. In the 1960s Presbyterian College students began reviving services at the church building. Codington came on the scene in the 1970s as the church reorganized; the congregation also became involved in church revitalizations in Lydia Mill and at Todd Memorial in Laurens.

Church revitalization became a mission, as surely as trips Codington and others have taken through the years to Haiti, building schools, teaching teachers how to teach Haitian children, bringing in medical supplies and digging wells.

They were going to go again in a few weeks, the trip has been postponed because of issues in Haiti. Codington said it will be rescheduled, primarily because the mission includes many PC

School of Pharmacy students who want the experience of practicing their craft on the island nation.

"Jesus is our model, he came to serve," Codington said. "He teaches us how to be human. He demonstrates what humanity looks like."

But just like the apostle Peter who refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet, sometimes people just need to get out of their own way. They have to be willing to move out of their comfort zone. They have to be willing to accept the food being brought into their neighborhood - the hammer-wielding teenagers who crawl all over their roofs.

Codington says Bethany Presbyterian Church and the Clinton community is "very motivated, very committed, very service-oriented."

"I have seen the impact on people when they engage," Codington said. "We're at our best when we think about our neigh-

bor rather than ourselves."

PC School of Pharmacy students have assisted with food distributions locally, and Codington said the experience showed the graduate students "why for people who struggle with their medicine bills, sometimes it's the choice between food and medicine."

The pharmacy school has opened up a whole new set of energetic, willing hands for the community service that is the bedrock foundation of Presbyterian College. For more than a century, the institution across the street from PC - Thornwell Home for Children - has provided a safe haven and education for young people at-risk of harmful detours in their lives. Whitten Center in Clinton has a long heritage of service to developmentally delayed individuals; churches through the Clinton community repair houses, provide coats, support feed the body and mind efforts led by the Open Door and United Ministries.

In addition to all these opportunities, an overseas ministry also is available. "Haiti is very accessible," Codington said, "and it is a whole different world."

Codington and others locally work with Mission Possible (www.OurMissionIsPossible.org). An August, 2012 "MP: Briefing" newsletter provides this insight: "At the end of July, a team of 11 went to Haiti to teach the Mission Possible teachers, staff and disciple boys at our annual Teacher Seminar. The seminar lasted four days and the teachers taught on several different topics. They also had time to interact with the teachers and learn more about the education system in Haiti. Those who provided Bible topics to the discipleship boys were happy to participate in the excellent discipleship process at our Haitian schools."

Codington said, "I love to see emerging leaders exposed to that (experience)."

With all that outreach, Codington sees the need for more, what he calls the quest "to do things in a new and fresh way right here."

His denomination has a project - 1001 Worshipping Communities - that encourages the formation of small congregations or Bible study groups, sometimes at coffee houses.

"My real passion - what gets me going in the morning - is finding ways smaller congregations can reach out. (Smaller churches) can become introverted, it's all about survival. How can we set up networks of small churches, and do things together. We conduct workshops around the country on this topic, looking at new ways to be effective. So it's not all about paying the bills, hiring a pastor. (It's all about) new ways of doing things."

Rev. Herb Codington
The Clinton Chronicle's
2014 Citizen of the Year



Bringing the world together. In January, 2013, Bethany Presbyterian Church near Clinton played host for dinner to Korean and Chinese students at Presbyterian College, who described their homeland lives and traditions. Bethany minister Herb Codington led off the discussion with a talk about Korea, the land of his birth while his parents were medical missionaries. Codington said hospitality is an essential trait of the Korean culture, which brought out the "breaking of bread" with the Far Eastern students and presentation of dishes in their native cuisine

Codington see potential growth in Clinton for the concept - which he says "is exploding in this country."

"This could be a model for Joanna, Lydia; many of the younger set are not thrilled with traditional church. This is church, without the frills."


He sees a need to reach out to long-haul truckers, by some estimates a 6.5 million-member "congregation" nationwide. "We tried this about 10 years ago. We had a chapel at a motel, some community people came - some motel guests came - but the truckers told us this is a small truck stop, the same truckers might not come through here at the same time every week. We didn't know them - they didn't know us."

So, in the vein of "take the

church to the people," Codington says a small mobile chapel could be the answer. "A small chapel on-site (there is a truck stop at I-26 and SC 56 east of Clinton), rather than in a motel," he envisions.

Also, there is a ministry backed up by a statistic - "one quarter of the world's prison population is in the USA, with families and children that's a lot of people impacted; when people are out of sight, they are out of mind," Codington said.

Since so many people in prison have said they turned to crime in their youth, Bethany members and others steered their ministry to support for Scouting and involvement with AMIkids. Codington said it might be time to turn again to Tyger River correctional facility. "They have



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- 1999 Pat Neal
- 2000 Ted Hunter
- 2001 David Peden
- 2002 Bailey Dixon
- 2003 Jimmy Revis
- 2004 Dr. Jerman Disasa
- 2005 Wayne Deitz
- 2006 Lumus Byrd and Russ Emerson
- 2007 Cynde O'Rear
- 2008 Dr. Bud Marchant
- 2009 Norman Scarborough
- 2010 Ruth Sharpe
- 2011 Ron and Nancy Dove
- 2012 Norman Pigeon
- 2013 Rev. Mims Camm
- 2014 Rev. Herb Codington



Kevin Anderson- a born engineer - at LCWSC

By Angela Aillsbrook
Horizons 2014

Kevin Anderson is an engineer for the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission. He works closely with treatment plants, pump stations, and water lines. The LCWSC operates sewer treatment for Clinton and Joanna, as well as some smaller towns such as Ware Shoals and Gray Court where they serve around 75,000 residents. Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission has a wastewater plant in Joanna and a collection line in Joanna. Anderson said it would be very difficult for the smaller towns to operate sewer systems, so he is happy to serve those communities as well.

In addition, LCWSC purchases drinking water from both Clinton and Laurens. Another aspect of the LCWSC is that they operate Lake Rabon, a manmade lake that was built in 1990 to provide drinking water for Laurens County. The adjacent park is open for public education and has picnic tables and benches for guests to use.

The Lauren County Water and Sewer Commission operates 13,500 water taps which is equivalent to around 34,290 people. They serve roughly half of Laurens County when you take away the people living in the cities and the ones who



Engineer Kevin Anderson, above right, provides valuable service to the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission in its mission to provide top-flight water and wastewater services to about half the citizens of Laurens County living in the unincorporated areas. – Photo by Angela Aillsbrook

have their own personal drinking wells. That would make LCWSC the fifth largest water and wastewater service in the state of South Carolina.

On a typical day at work, Anderson deals with the water quality and takes care of any problems that arise. He also checks chlorine readings to make sure there are no bacteria. In addition, he monitors the storage tanks to see if they need to be repaired.

Growing up in the rural area of Cassatt, Anderson learned from his mechanic father how to repair and design different things. He had always been interested in engineering, but was amazed when he learned how many different types of engineers there are. As a Clemson University student, he decided to pursue agricultural engineering. After he graduated, he worked with irrigation for five years, and then decided he wanted to pump water. His next job was working for DHEC in

Columbia. Next, he switched career paths to civil engineering where he then worked for BP Barber for five years. After that, he decided to move to Laurens and work for LCWSC. Anderson said he is happy to live and work in a rural community that reminds him of his childhood.

Anderson enjoys being an engineer and said he has no aspiration whatsoever to take on the executive director position. Management is not his first preference. He is comfortable where he is in the company and is content with staying in his same job for a while.

Technology is drastically changing for how the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission operates. Now, they are able to look on a map and see what is happening at a particular water meter. Anderson is able to see the history of the water meter, tell when the last meter reading was, and if there are any leaks. To do this, LCWSC uses a new computer program called GIS where they can link themselves to the water meters in the real world.

Just a few years ago, the only way to access this data was to look it up in paper files. In addition, with this new technology the employees are able to have an iPad with them on the field and can communicate with other people at their office.

Anderson believes the next big change in technology will be something not yet imaged. It will be something that as of now, we do not see as a need for change. He said, “One of the scary things, but exciting things, is that we do not know what these changes are yet.” If Anderson had to guess what this would be, he said it would be to clear drinking water of minute chemicals or to prevent those chemicals from forming

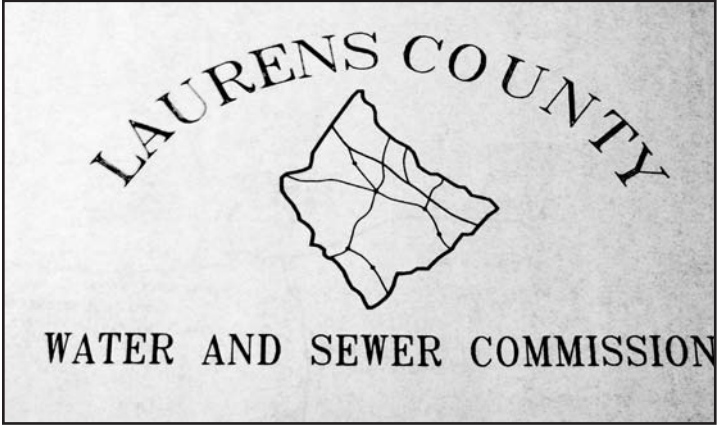


in the first place. He said LCWSC uses the national water research to help them predict what to do next. They also look at the larger towns in South Carolina for guidance on what to change in their system.

Anderson strongly believes that Laurens County is up and coming because of their recent economic development and employment increases. To him, that is “The biggest indicator of if a community is doing well.”

He said Laurens County needs to use its differences as an advantage. The community will never be like Spartanburg and Greenville, but it will still be able to grow.

Anderson and his wife are expecting their first child and he said, “I have confidence that the future of Laurens County will be a great place for someone to live and work 20 years down the road when our child is about to go to college.”



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4 Working Together

Horizons 2014 • Feb. 26, 2014

Tracie Priestley - wanting to be involved

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

A broader base of opinions - a former mayoral candidate for the City of Clinton believes that would expand the scope of cultural and recreational offerings for families, and strengthen the community.

Tracie Priestley ran for mayor in the fall on, essentially, that platform. "I just, basically, wanted people more involved. To put a voice out there. You cannot complain if you're not involved."

Priestley ran third in a special election that made Bob McLean mayor in a runoff over city council member Danny Cook. Seeking the city's highest office, as a social worker, wife and mother of two, was "an experience," she said. "I expect Mayor McLean will do everything he said he will do, I will help," Priestley said.

She wants the City of Clinton to be "more involved with families and the children." She wants Clinton to be "a place to be safe, with more families involved and parents as overseers" of more activities for young people.

"Get their minds going," Priestley said. "Culture and an arts program. Something to expand (young people's) base of knowledge. If the city wants to expand its programs, the parents would embrace it. Young people here do not have a whole lot to do.

"They hang out, they're left to their own means.

"We have to step up. They are going to be leading us in 20 years."

Priestley supports the city's Town Rhythms summer concert series, and she concedes a challenge in making that series less "old music" and more modern for a younger audience. "You



'The run was an experience.' Tracie Priestley standing with The Clinton Chronicle Sept. 11, 2013 issue that announced her platform says running for mayor of Clinton was a rewarding experience. Running against Bob McLean (who was elected mayor) and Danny Cook (city council member), Priestley outlined a "listening" platform that urged city government to be more out-going in approaching the citizens, and more willing to try the idea brought forth by citizens. In the "what someone would be surprised to learn" portion of the question-and-answer, Priestley revealed she is her family's "Mrs. Fix-It", and if she has to call in a repairman, she watches the repair to learn how to make the household fix the next time. - Photo by Vic MacDonald

need to find something appropriate. So much out there is inappropriate, they like it, but it's not appropriate. You need to find that positive role model group."

The City of Clinton several times has showcased the Clinton High Gospel Choir. "That is a step in the right direction," Priestley said.

She said young people come to the Town Rhythms events, but they just hang around - they're not engaged. "There is a disconnect with the city," she said. "People would support things if

they knew it was going on. There are so many good people, wonderful opinions, capable people. It seems like the same few are responsible for doing everything.

"We need to reach out a little further than what we reach to."

Priestley grew up in Clinton. Her mom was from Cross Hill and after years as "an Army brat," Priestley found herself here because her dad wanted this children to grow up in a community. Her dad died when she was eight, and her mother also is

deceased.

"He brought us back here," she said of her father. "We grew up here. I had a good childhood."

Priestley is a Winthrop graduate - in the last class to call Winthrop "a college," now the Rock Hill institution is a university, known internationally for its teacher education programs.

In mid-February Priestley was undergoing a job transformation. She was with the SC youth advocacy program working with foster homes. She is

transitioning into a position in Greenwood, with the Department of Social Services working with aid recipients looking for employment.

Her challenge - break "the cycle of poverty."

"We have to invest in what we've got," she says of the state's workforce. "I am pro-South Carolina. That's what has bothered me about Gov. Haley - she has brought in so many outside people. We have people who can do these same jobs."

Living in poverty, being on welfare sometimes is "not just the situation" a person finds him/herself in, she said. "It's a mindset," of generational poverty passed from parents to children who then become parents.

Working with Greenwood County DSS, Priestley will work with clients and with companies - she is seeking out businesses that will hire aid recipients who must actively seek work and meet other requirements to continue qualifying for state assistance.

"Hopefully, we can get some businesses (in Clinton), and our people can work here," she said. (If that happens) our morale will

start to lift. It's a hard thing to look for work, and can't find anything."

Priestley's husband Mark works in Lyman for American Foam and Fabric, a business that relocated from Clinton. He is shipping supervisor, and Mark is a fixture at the Clinton Family YMCA where he works out and instructs a T25 class.

"He's at the Y first thing in the morning, and after he gets off work," she said. "His thing is health and fitness." Son Adorian (it is a Biblical name, it means "double honor") follows suit, he is a basketball player.

"He says he's going to Duke, he can spend hours at the Y," Priestley said.

The Priestleys' daughter, 19-year-old Amber, received her CNA nursing accreditation through a program at Clinton High School, and she is taking Piedmont Tech classes; Tracey also is grandmother to 20-month-old Akeem.

Amber, she says, is "looking for work" - seeking that one foot-in-the-door position that will elevate her to the position of Mark and Tracey Priestley, a working Clinton family.



Rob Russian - miles and miles of roads to keep

By Vic MacDonald
Horizons 2014

One thousand fifty. Robert Russian needs to know every single one - every one of those 1,050 miles of public roads in Laurens County. It's a far-flung responsibility, to manage the shop that maintains every single one of those miles. That's road repair, shoulder maintenance, vegetation cut-backs, bridges and picking up litter.

Russian manages the roadways of Laurens County with a staff of 53 - SC DOT is posting seven more jobs for Laurens County to bring the maintenance workforce back up to 60. Twenty years ago, it was more than 100 employees. Doing the same - even more - with less is the "new normal" for South Carolina public agencies.

The entry level positions start at \$10 an hour, and employees are required to obtain their CDL license within six months. The salary scale escalates for skilled employees - motorgrader and backhoe operators, and mechanics. Russian said some employees make 30 to 40 years in roads maintenance.

As with many outdoor jobs, there are risks in roads maintenance. Take the snow and ice that blanketed Laurens County Jan. 29-30 and then again Feb. 11-13; it did not hit here as hard as in Columbia, and Atlanta was so gridlocked motorists abandoned their cars on the freeway and walked home.

"When people are being told 'don't go out,' 60 of us are out there," Russian said. "These guys do not get enough credit for that. It is white-knuckle driving for 12 straight hours."

Every year counties throughout the state go through a snow plan. Workers know in advance what 12-hour shift they will be on; keeping the roads as safe as possible is a 24-hour task when the weather turns rough.

Equipment has to be up to par, and supplies have to be replenished. "It's a constant battle," Russian said.



Far-flung responsibilities. Robert Russian with a Laurens County map in the background is responsible for a SC Department of Transportation maintenance shop that keeps 1,050 miles of public right of way safe for travelers. The resident maintenance engineer for District 2 Laurens Maintenance, Russian also works with the Laurens County Transportation Committee to identify and assist with repair roads within the county system. "They truly have what's best for the traveling public in mind," Russian said of the volunteer CTC. "They give a very thorough evaluation of what needs to be done out there, and they're not afraid to try new things." - Photo by Vic MacDonald

A two-and-half year veteran of the Laurens County maintenance shop, Russian also worked for DOT in Saluda and Greenwood. He and family - wife and two children - live in the Ninety Six area. Russian is a 1999 Virginia Tech graduate with a mining engineering degree, and he worked for a time in the mining industry - a very "profits-driven industry," he says. He has 13 years experience with roads maintenance in South Carolina.

Russian wants to make Laurens County maintenance more accessible and responsive to the public. The office takes work requests from county residents, advises house builders and others who work on the public right of way, and the state has information available at scdot.org.

The website details "doing business with SC DOT, how we should be involved," Russian said.

Officially his title is Resident

Maintenance Engineer, District 2 Laurens Maintenance. Russian wants to continue building relationships with governments throughout Laurens County, being responsive to their needs and the needs of their citizens.

"Mike Reddeck (retiring Clinton public works director) does a really good job. We have a good relationship with Dale Satterfield (Reddeck's replacement) at Laurens CPW. We are looking forward to working with him in Clinton," Russian said. "The biggest problem for Clinton is drainage areas, especially Lydia Mill, on private property."

Russian also works closely with the Laurens County Transportation Committee; Niles Clark is the chairman. Russian said the county's CTC is as good as they come in South Carolina. "They have been really good to me, really good to work with," he said.

The CTC gets about \$1 million a year in state-refunded gas

tax money to handle county-maintained roads. The money is never enough to meet all the needs, which committee members see first-hand during a ride-through of roads all over Laurens County.

"They do a very thorough evaluation," Russian said. "They know what needs to be done out there, and they're not afraid to try new things. The CTC is as big an asset as we can have (in Laurens County)."

"They do a lot with a million dollars - that sounds like a lot, it's not in the roads business. They put a lot of time and effort where it's needed most. They truly have what's best for the traveling public in mind. They are conscientious about their money. They handle all their money so the maximum amount hits the road."

Russian says he will continue the Laurens maintenance shop's involvement with litter clean-up efforts. SC DOT honored the

Laurens County Chamber's beautification effort with the state's top award in 2012, and the Beautification Committee sponsors quarterly clean ups. Maintenance shop personnel pitch in with a friendly in-house competition to see which division can pick up the most litter.

The maintenance shop has a county inmates crew that can assist in litter pickup. Russian said the crew lately has been more involved with vegetation control, since the shop's workforce has declined and priorities shifted. He said when the seven new employees are hired and trained, and the workforce is back to 60 the priorities can be re-examined.

"This county is very fortunate with the involvement of the Chamber," Russian said. "All our employees participate in a pick-up day, we have competition among groups. It coincides with a Chamber (beautification) day."

The next Chamber-sponsored litter pick-up day for Laurens County will be March 8.

Russian might have his guys,

and encourage volunteer groups, to bring rakes. One of his pet-peeves - cigarette butts discarded at traffic lights. US 76 bypass/business intersection (near Walmart) in Laurens "I bet there's 500 cigarette butts out there," he said.

Drivers don't think throwing a cigarette out the window while waiting at a red light is littering, "but it is," Russian said. Regardless of popular opinion, cigarette butts and filters do not bio-degrade that quickly - as more pile up, the area becomes more and more unsightly.

"It is disheartening to see places where the inmates clean up, and then it's right back the way it was," Russian said.

He says "habitual litterers" are a major problem - "every day in every location, and they get away with it."

It surely won't matter to thoughtless litter-bugs, but remember - rain, sleet or snow, somebody is out there working on the safety and appearance of the one thousand fifty in Laurens County.





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