# 2016 Insight | Building Success Through the Generations

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Sherry Matthews|Sampson Independent

**Although arthritis has slowed work with her hands, Edna Carr says she can still thorn a rose and put together a bouquet when called upon to do so.**

Courtesy photos

**The shingle Edna Carr first hung out at her Park Avenue home was among the prized possessions she moved to her second location on Beamon Street.**

# A bloomin' success

A prayer whispered 50 years ago is what Edna Carr attributes to five decades of success in the floral business

**By Sherry Matthews**
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Edna Carr peers over her glasses into a cooler filled with a kaleidescope of colors that roar into view the minute the door is pulled open. There's yellow miniature roses and a bucket filled with nothing but Baby's Breath and assorted greenery on one side, bright yellow, red and purple tulips on the other, and in the center, of course, are dozens upon dozens of red roses.

Dotted throughout the chilly room are assorted other fresh cut flowers all beckoning to be chosen for the latest arrangement on the list.

It's just under 10 days until Valentine's and Carr and her girls are counting the days, and the flowers, as they gear up for yet another V-Day rush. The proprietor smiles knowingly, then pushes the door shut, satisfied that she has enough blossoms for this week and aware that another truck filled to the brim with flowers will be on its way long before the mad rush that is to come.

The diminuitive 77-year-old isn't worried about this latest V-Day. She's traveled this road before, for decades, in fact, and she knows that like all those which have come before, this day will be busy but she'll get through it and she'll love every single minute, no matter how hectic.

It's the way Edna Carr has felt for the past 50 years, ever since the day she made — and sold — her very first floral arrangement.

"I absolutely love this business," Carr attested, taking time to sit down for an interview amid the hubub of the daily activity that is Edna's Florist. Though she is talkative, even reflective, as she sorts through hundreds of photos that tell the story of a long and illustrious career in the floral business, she keeps one eye trained on the door, ready to jump up and help a customer if the need arises.

"I love it all. I always have and I always will. This is where God intended for me to be, and as surely as I'm sitting here, this is where I'm gonna stay until He decides it's time for me to stop,"

See BLOOMIN | 7A


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# Butler: Success comes through hard work

**By Chase Jordan**
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Tim Butler knows a lot about hard work — a foundation that runs in his family.

"The only place that success comes before work is in the dictionary," Butler attested during a recent interview. In fact, if he had to associate a quote with his father, Samuel C. Butler, that would be the one. As one of 10 siblings, Butler grew up on a family farm in Clinton as the child of Samuel C. Butler and Bertha Butler.

"This is home," Butler said about Samson County.

The farm has been in his family for more than 100 years. It began with just 14 acres of land and is now a 65-acre soybean farm. It taught him many lessons in life.

"It gave you discipline because you always had something to do," he said. "We grew our own food and I had the chance to drive any type of machinery. We still got tractors and all that good stuff."

Along with appreciating hard work, he also developed a fondness for human nature.

"I just love to see stuff grow," he said.

For years, he been involved in the growth of well known Butler & Son Funeral Home, Inc. in Clinton and Roseboro. Caring is the foundation of the funeral home, which began in the early 1970s by his late father. It continued to grow and became known as Butler & Son Funeral Home, Inc. in the 1980s. A second location in Clinton began in 2004. Butler is assisted by his siblings and other employees. In a world of growing technology, Butler believes it will never eliminate the personal touch.

"...It's all about service, that's the first thing," Butler stressed. "Service is a lost art nowadays. Technology is great, but you can't replace the professional touch with meeting face to face and phone calls."

There's other's ways for families to remember loved ones, such as cremation. But Butler believes nothing will replace the traditional burial.

"At the end of the day you want to have a presentation so the family will have a pleasant memory," he said. "You want that loved one to be treated with dignity and respect.

"This is something that we're all going to experience in this world. You're going to have to experience death on one level or another."

Being from a large family, Butler had to help bury several of his family members. In the early 1970s the first person buried by the business was his grandfather, Hubert Butler. He was just a teenager at the time. Years later, he had to bury his father, in 2014, and mother, in 2001.

"It makes you a stronger person in this industry when you have to deal with things hitting close to home," Butler said about empathy.

The funeral home is professional members of the Funeral Directors & Morticians Association of N.C. Inc., the National Funeral Directors & Morticians Association, Inc. and the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice. It's also licensed through the N.C. Board of Funeral Service and The Funeral Service Examining Board of theUnited States Inc. For their professional work, Butler & Sons earned the "Pursuit of Excellence" award from the National Funeral Directors Association and the "Professional of the Year" award from the Funeral Directors & Morticians Association of N.C. Inc.

Butler alluded to how establishing a connection with community members is something that began many years ago with his parents. He helps people through tough times at the funeral home, but every now and then, he'll get a call from people wanting his advice.

"People just need direction on some things or my opinion," Butler said. "I feel that my business is for helping people who are acquiring about things, if you can, or direct them to the right resource if you can do it," he said.

When it comes to the future, Butler & Sons will continue to build on the foundation they established with the two locations. One of the important aspects is educating the public and associates about the importance of pre-planning for funeral arrangements and the future.

With many accomplishments, the family farm became a seed for the success of the funeral home. His father owned barbershops and later put his money towards barbershops. Butler credited his father for being successful in his endeavors and dealing with community members.

"He has a knack for dealing with the public very well," he said. "Everything thing that he approached he was very successful."

He wants Butler & Sons to remain in his family. He's married to Francis, a retired teacher. They have twin daughters, Timberly and Tierra. Both are in the medical field. Timberly will graduate soon from medical school in Wake Forest. Tierra recently earned a pharmacy degree from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and is currently in a residency program at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

"I just want to keep it in the family line and build upon what my granddad and my dad started," he said. "Granddaddy started the foundation with everything that we have and dad just expanded the vision. He was one of those visionary type of guys, although he just had a seventh grade education."

Butler's parents did not receive higher education, but the importance of college was always stressed to them. All of the children have been to college and have earned at least one degree.

"They had 10 kids and they made sure they had college degrees," Butler said.

While attending Midway High School, Butler was involved in the student government association, became class president, lettered in varsity basketball and FFA.

"Everybody was involved in FFA back then," Butler said. "I was pretty active in high school and college."

After graduating from Midway, Butler advanced his education by attending North Carolina Central University and mortuary school at Fayetteville Tech Community College.

When Butler is not providing service to families at the funeral home, he is busy with other community organizations. He serves as the chairman of the Roseboro Zoning Board and was the leader of the local economic development commission. At one time, he was a board member of the Clinton-Sampson Chamber of Commerce. He's also a member of the Sampson County Economic Development Board. Butler is a deacon at Beaver Dam Missionary Baptist Church in Clinton. As a business owner, Butler believes it's important to give something back to the community.

> "You want that loved one to be treated with dignity and respect."
>
> **- Tim Butler**

"I'm not just here to get your money," Butler said. "You can't get paid for everything that you do. It don't work that way. In the long run it always balances out. I had the opportunity to network and meet wonderful folks."

As a successful business owner, he's also thankful for his family.

"I came from a large family that's got a chance to not only give back to the community, but to give back to society as a whole from the standpoint of not letting growing up in a small rural area define what you can do," Butler said. "I always tell my daughters that and my sisters and brothers taught me that."

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# Family, friends instrumental in drag strip reconstruction

**From Staff and Galot Motorsports**

In 2013 Sampson County businessman Earl Wells and wife Peggy set out on a new business adventure when they purchased the Dunn- Benson Drag Strip. The vision was simple: design and create a better racing surface that racers could depend on. That simple vision quickly escalated into what is now GALOT Motorsports Park which features state of the art technology.

"The initial vision was for us to create a better surface and drag strip itself," stated Mr. Wells. "I decided that if we were going to have a state of the art track, then we needed a facility to match it."

The new state of the art facility was designed with the race fan and racer in mind. The facility features stadium seating, two LED video boards, an indoor concession and souvenir stand, along with two climate controlled tower suites to maximize the overall experience for fans. Racers will have the benefit of a climate controlled starting line, asphalt parking, a speed shop, and 70 RV electrical hook-ups. GALOT Motorsports Park is also certified as the flattest racing surface in the world which will allow racers to obtain maximum performance.

## Earl Wells

Sampson County Native Earl Wells ventured into the motorsports industry in 2002 when he built his first professional pulling tractor with son-in-law John Strickland. It wasn't until January of 2012 that Mr. Wells was exposed to the sport of drag racing when he purchased his first Pro Modified race car. The next year the opportunity came to buy the former Dunn-Benson Drag Strip and Mr. Wells acted fast.

"I saw this as a great investment opportunity," stated Mr. Wells. "It is my vision to create a safe place to race along with creating a family environment for everyone to enjoy."

Family has been a vital attribute to the construction of GALOT Motorsports Park. Son-in-law John Strickland has overseen all of the construction with step-daughter Dana Strickland serving as the track liaison.

"From the very beginning my wife Peggy has been very proactive in making sure this is a family oriented facility," stated Mr. Wells. "It has been our number one goal and will continue to be at the forefront of our operation."

## John Strickland

John Strickland is a successful businessman in his own right. Along with assisting in the construction process of GALOT Motorsports Park, Strickland owns and operates S&S Backhoe. Operating a business while serving as a vital role in the construction of GALOT Motorsports Park can be challenging but Strickland takes it with stride.

"Things can be challenging at times, but the great thing about having family work with you is you can overcome those obstacles," stated Strickland. "It's going to be great to see this place in a few months and to see everyone enjoying it after all the hard work we have put into it!"

When not busy operating his business or assisting with the construction of GALOT Motorsports Park, he can be found behind the wheel of his pro pulling tractor or his race car. In his first year of competition in the PDRA, Strickland was named Rookie of the Year and set the current world record.

## Dana Strickland

For track liaison Dana Strickland dealing with GALOT Motorsports Park is only part of a very busy life style. As a mother of two, Strickland balances her time between GALOT Motorsports Park, family, running a hog farm and operating a hair salon.

"We have to balance our time between being here, there and everywhere," stated Strickland. "Having the family involved can be challenging at times, but at the end of the day the goal was to have a family driven atmosphere."

As March quickly approaches the GALOT Motorsports Park Team is in the finishing stages of being ready to usher in a new era of drag racing. Testing for racers will begin March 24th with the first points race taking place the first weekend in April. Throughout the 2016 season GALOT Motorsports Park will host over 30 events headlined by the NHRA Lucas Oil Divisional and PDRA's Dragstock.

"We wanted to lead the drag racing industry with a first class racing facility," stated Mr. Wells. "And I think we have accomplished that."

Adam Capps contributed to this article. Reach Adam Capps at 910-214-9585 and follow him on Twitter @acbirdie.

Courtesy Photo

**A look at the newly surfaced drag strip at Galot Motorsports Park.**

Adam Capps/Sampson Independent

**Entrance sign off of 242 directing fans to the gates of the newly renovated Galot Motorsports Park.**

**The newly surfaced race track from the view of a driver prior to a race.**

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# Pipelines to success

**By Chase Jordan**
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Around Roseboro, the Crumpler family is well known for making quality plastic drainage pipe products — a vision that began many years ago.

Crumpler Plastic Pipe was started in 1975 by Houston Crumpler Jr. and John Crumpler, who retired in 2016. The original family business began in 1945 by Houston L. Crumpler Sr. It was called Crumpler Brick and Tile, Inc. Clay drain pipes were produced at the facility.

"Roseboro had a lot of clay beds," said Houston L. Crumpler III, the grandson of the visionary, during a recent interview.

During the 1940s, a local brick business operated two locations and sold one to Crumpler. Coming out of the Great Depression, the owner did not have a need for facilities. Crumpler became the owner of one of the secondary properties located on Old Brick Mill Road in Roseboro.

"Right after he bought it, World War II was ending and the federal government wanted to put all the guys who fought in the war back to work," Houston said. "They encouraged small businesses to expand."

Crumpler Sr. was able to get federal loans through the Small Business Administration which helped modernize the plant to make it more efficient.

"That's how he got his start," Crumpler III said about the steps he took to build the company and to give soldiers returning home to Roseboro a place to work.

Afterwards, the business had a few decades of success selling clay drain pipes. But that would change in the 1970s.

"In the 70s, plastic pipe came along and took over the clay drain pipe business," he pointed out. "We had to switch over to the plastic pipe in order to stay in business."

At the time, Crumpler Sr. was ready to retire, so his sons carried on the legacy of the business. They oversaw that transition from clay to plastic and they changed the company's name to Crumpler Plastic Pipe.

Now Crumpler Plastic Pipe specializes in drainage pipes for golf courses, home septic systems, farms and highways. About 50 people work at the facility in Roseboro. Before Crumpler Brick and Tile Company employed about 100.

"The clay business was more labor intensive than the plastic pipe," Crumpler III said about the many steps involved. "He had about double the employees we had due to the labor that was involved with making clay pipes."

Today, the plastic pipes at the facility are produced by extruders which melt the plastic down to a die before it's molded into a mold. As the vice president of the company, it's a practice the Sampson County native enjoys being involved with along with other aspects of the community.

"It started in Sampson County and it's our home," Crumpler III said. "It's where most of our employees are from as well. Our family has been in Sampson County for 200 years or more. We have been here a long time and we plan to stay here."

The Lakewood High School graduate grew up in Roseboro and attended Campbell University, where he earned a degree in business administration. He married his wife Paula and together they have two children. For the Crumplers, legacy is important.

"It's been in our family since the 1940s," he said about the business. "This is how my grandfather made a living and supported his family and this is how my father made a living to support our family. Hopefully, it'll be a way that I can make a living to support mine."

In addition to supporting the Crumplers, the business also supports a lot of people in the community.

"It's been a vital part of the community for many years," Crumpler III said. "I feel proud of the heritage that we have and I hope to continue to live up to that in the future."

The owners of Crumpler Plastic Pipe believes their business is unique because of their customer service and the relationships developed with customers.

"Our largest competitor is a public traded company and we're a small family business," Crumpler III said. "When we're dealing with farmers (and other customers), they know when they talk to us, we can back up what we say because we own the business. We're not just somebody working for someone in a corporate headquarters in a state far away, owned by a Wall Street bank."

Crumpler III said making a personal connection with customers goes a long way when it comes to providing service.

See PIPELINES | 6A

Chase Jordan | Sampson Independent
**Crumpler Plastic Pipe produces products in Roseboro which are distributed throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.**

Chase Jordan | Sampson Independent
**Charlie Melvin produces produces pipe products at Crumpler Plastic Pipe in Roseboro.**

Chase Jordan | Sampson Independent
**Located in Roseboro, Crumpler Plastic Pipe employs about 50 people.**

# ABC Express looks to modernize insurance

Adam Capps/Sampson Independent
**Sara Rosario holds family dog, Pebbles, along with her father and owner, Jeff Warren.**

**ABC Express Insurance agent, Jackie Smith keys in information.**

**By Adam Capps**
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ABC Express Insurance Company has been sitting at the corner of Vance and College streets since 2006. That's when Jeff Warren decided he would go into the insurance business after he saw the mobile home industry (which he was previously in) headed south.

"When the banks started spiralling downward, I knew I needed to get into something else," he said. "I knew insurance; I knew the ins and outs of the business, and I thought that it would be a good way to make a living."

His goal was more than just to make a living, though. He really wanted to help others, and modernize the way insurance sales was done. Almost immediately after starting the company, he began using more computerized and technological ways when it came to making payments and matters of that sort.

Today, he has his own app that can be downloaded for free in the Apple App Store and in the Google Play Store. The app allows any user, whether they have insurance with Warren and ABC Express or not, to make payments via the app, as long as their insurance provider is also set up within the app.

"That was the vision," he said. "I wanted to modernize the way things were done, and make everything more user friendly."

Warren didn't just want to modernize the way insurance was sold, he wanted to revamp where it was housed. He purchased the building they operate out of in 2015, and has since had a vision in mind for that as well.

"I wanted to preserve the history of downtown Clinton on the outside, and that's still being redone a little, but I really wanted to modernize the inside," said Warren. "I think we did a good job of that. This doesn't look like your typical place to come buy insurance in Clinton."

ABC Express stands for Affordable Basic Coverage.

"Fast, friendly service," smiled Warren. "That's our motto. We are proud of what we've got here, and it has been great to work with my daughter, Sara here as well."

**The outside of ABC Express Insurance on Vance St. in Clinton.**

Sara Rosario has been on-board with her dad since 2008, and has admitted it's not always easiest, but at the end of the day she thinks pretty highly of her boss.

"With him being my dad, I feel like he expects more out of me, and that's OK," she acknowledged, smiling knowingly.

Warren interjected: "Being able to bring my daughter to work, that makes it really nice, and the whole place just has that good ole family feel to it, so that's easy to get used to."

Among others who were working, were Jackie Smith, a sales agent, and the family dog, Pebbles.

"Pebbles here makes this place feel a lot like home ya know," said Warren. "It's a laid-back, family style atmosphere, but at the same time, we are very goal-oriented and trying to serve the people of Clinton the best that we think we can."

They both went on to mention that working in Clinton has been good to them as well.

"The people in Clinton are great, and have been very welcoming to us ever since the day we opened up shop," said Warren. It's a good place to be, and a good place to live. I really am proud to run a business in this area."

For more information on ABC Express Insurance Company, contact them at 910-590-2886.

Reach Adam Capps at 910-214-9585

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# Burney's keeps it all in the family

**By Kristy D. Carter**
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Every morning, before the sun rises over downtown Clinton, Larry Scronce and Jeff Byrd make their way to Vance Street around 4 a.m. to open the doors of a family-run bakery, doing the prep work and frying the pastries sold at Burney's Sweets and More.

Larry and Jeff are just two of the family members who work for the business that opened its doors in September 2014. The bakery was opened by retired educators and sisters Denise Scronce and Cindi Norris. Since the doors opened, the sweet smell of fresh croissants, doughnuts, cakes and other goodies have filled the air around the courthouse square.

Denise and Cindi opened the bakery after Doris and Tom Burney, owners of Burney's in Elizabethtown and Southport, decided to venture out and sell franchising rights to the sister team.

"It is like we have a family with the Burneys," Denise said.

And a family it is. In addition to Denise, Cindi, Larry and Jeff, two other members of the family work at the bakery as employees and many other family members help by filling in when needed.

"This was always going to be a family business," Denise added. "We knew from the beginning that we wanted our family to play a major part in making this business successful."

Larry, who helps open the bakery and starts frying the goodies, is Denise's husband. Jeff, who alternates days with Larry, is married to Denise and Cindi's niece, Terri, who also helps out around the bakery when she can. Jeff and Terri's daughter, Rachel, works at the bakery full time, since graduating from college and as she waits to begin graduate school. Cindi's son Ian works on the weekend, filling in for Larry and Jeff, when they have to work their "regular" jobs.

"Larry and Jeff come in here about 4, start frying about 6 and then head off to their the real jobs about 8," Denise said.

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**Family members Rachel Byrd, Cindi Norris, Denise Scronce, Megan Scronce, Larry Scronce and Ian Norris loving making the 'family business' all about family and loving God.**

Denise's daughters Megan and Media, along with Media's husband Bryan, are part of the marketing team — designing the business logo and apparel, while keeping Facebook and other social media up to date. Other family members serve as members of the quality control team, tasting all the items sold and helping both Cindi and Denise perfect their recipes.

"Everyone fights over the chicken salad," Megan shared. "We even have some people who like to hide it and say there isn't anymore left."

Cindi and Denise say they make sure the entire family knows the "family business," just in case someone has to fill in one day. No one minds, though. The entire family sticks together when it comes to Burney's.

The idea to open a bakery-style business began after Cindi's home-based business began growing and she realized she was going to have to expand into a new location. Cindi has been baking homemade goodies such as cake pops, cookie pops and suckers for her business, How Sweet it Is.

"I couldn't imagine doing this with anyone else," Cindi said

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**Burney's centers its business around two things — Christ and family. This wall of pictures in the bakery shows how important both are to Cindi Norris and Denise Scronce.**

about working with Denise. "We may not always get along, but we figure things out and just keep going."

Denise and Cindi were familiar with Burney's from vacationing at White Lake and they approached them with the business idea. It wasn't the first time the Burneys had been approached by people, but up until the sisters' visit, the couple had declined to begin any type of partnership with anyone. After much praying, from both sides, the Burney's decided to sell Denise and Cindi the franchise.

"It was divine intervention," Denise said about the opportunity she and Cindi had to buy into the Burney's franchise.

While mirrored after the Elizabethtown Burney's location, the Clinton Burney's location includes more than the traditional sweets. Cindi and Denise both have a pimento cheese recipe that is used for sandwiches and a chicken salad recipe that leaves customers begging for more.

Cindi has continued to make her original cake pops, cookie pops, chocolate-covered pretzels and gourmet suckers. She said these items are always available to purchase individually or in a gift basket.

All the basic bakery items are on hand, baked fresh daily. Denise and Cindi serve cakes, pies, croissants, cinnamon twits, doughnuts, gourmet apples and more.

"We don't sell anything that hasn't been baked fresh that day," Denise stressed.

While the Clinton location belongs to Denise and Cindi, they use the recipes and techniques of the original Burney's for the croissants and other pastries.

Burney's Sweets and More is not just a bakery, but a deli-style restaurant offering boxed lunches for those on the go, or fresh made sandwiches for anyone who wants to sit in and dine. During the cold months, homemade soups are also served during lunch hours.

From the beginning, Denise said this business has been a family endeavor.

"You'll see family faces working in here everyday," Denise said. "We are a family-oriented business. Not only that, but we want everyone to see this is a Christ-centered family."

The family business began back in the the late 1980s, when Denise and Cindi's parents opened the Cinnamon Stick, and started selling those suckers Cindi is so famous for these days. As young girls, Denise and Cindi said the suckers were very popular and an item they knew the new family business had to have on the menu.

The family atmosphere extends beyond just those who fall into the blood line. Both Denise and Cindi say all their customers are their family, making sure to speak to everyone when they come in the door and remembering

See BURENEY'S | 9A

DuBose Strapping

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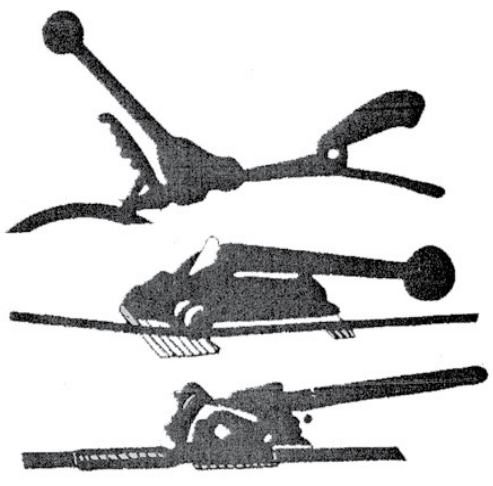

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# Horne, Matthews keep family traditions alive

**By Kristy D. Carter**
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Dwight Horne and Jimmy Matthews have both been outstanding pillars in the Sampson County and Clinton City communities for many years, expanding family businesses that have served local citizens for more than 50 years.

L.M. Horne and J.A. Williams started Clinton Appliance and Tire Company in 1952. At the time, the business was located in downtown Clinton, where the Bee Hive Thrift Store is located on College Street.

Williams' son Al began working with the family business in 1978, followed by Horne's son Dwight in 1981. In 1985, both the younger Williams and Horne started working to buy their father's business and continue running the operation and serving local citizens.

"My daddy retired in 1985 and that's when Al and I took it over," Horne said. "Mr. Williams retired that same year and Al and I have been running things since."

According to Horne, after his father retired, he came back into the family business. Many of the family members have worked with the business part-time, helping out around the store when ever they have been needed.

"A lot has changed in the last 60 years," Horne said from his office. "When we first started out, daddy was selling appliances and tires. Now, we sell a lot of things."

In the early 1960s, Horne said his father began selling furniture in addition to the appliances and tires. The furniture store was opened at that time, while the store on College Street remained open until 1985.

"For economic reasons we had to close the second store on College Street," Horne said. "For the next few years, we just had the store in its present location."

According to Horne, in 1991, the business expanded with the building of a warehouse on U.S. 701, just outside of town. That, he said, was important, as the business was growing and they needed extra storage space so that they could offer more to their customers.

"Two things have remained consistent since my daddy started this business," Horne said. "One of those is customer service. We treat our customers the way we want to be treated. That's what my daddy always taught me."

Through the years, Horne said, he has followed in what his father and Mr. Williams taught him — whatever the customer wants, the customer gets.

"I would really like for him to see us now," Horne said. "I know he would be proud of the business we have grown."

Horne doesn't have any family that is planning to continue the family business, but instead, he has long-time employee Jason Smith. Horne said Smith has been working with the business for many years and he is coming in as a partner.

"We have been lucky," Horne said. "The key to success is the ability to change and that's what we have done."

Horne hasn't always been in the family business. After graduating from college, he taught and coached locally from 1974-1981. That coaching tradition carried on, as he coached the Clinton High School varsity boys basketball team for 14 years. He is now coaching his grandchildren's teams.

Horne has been a member of the Kiwanis Club for more than 20 years. He attends First United Methodist Church, as has for more than 30 years. He is married to Lou Ann Horne, and they have three children, Katherine Pope, Emily Pearson and Stephen Horne. The couple shares seven grandchildren as well.

Williams is married to Lora Ann and currently manages the warehouse and service department. He has one daughter.

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**Dwight Horne, along with Al Williams, are carrying on the family business and Clinton Appliance. The business was started by the men's fathers in the 1950s.**

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**Jimmy Matthews and wife Bonnie have been working and serving the Sampson County community for almost 50 years.**

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**In Dwight Horne's office, a wall displaying family memorabilia is shared with customers who have been coming in the store for nearly 60 years.**

**Jimmy Matthews**

In 1930, Otis Register established Register's Drug Company in downtown Clinton. Spencer Matthews, Jimmy Matthews's father, who was from Lewisburg, moved to Clinton in the late 1930s and became a pharmacy technician and assisted Register at the business.

Spencer Matthews became a partner of MacPhail Herring in the 1950s, who later sold out the business that became Dawkins and Matthews Drug Store. In 1964, Matthews bought Dawkins.

Jimmy joined his father's business after graduating from pharmacy school in 1967, and the older Matthews continued to work at the business until his health no longer allowed him to do so.

In the early 1970s, Jimmy's wife Bonnie, who is also a pharmacist, began working with Darden Pharmacy in downtown Clinton. In the mid 1970s, Darden Pharmacy and Matthews Drug Company were joined and just a few years down the road, the Darden location was closed and the two pharmacies were combined into one facility in Jordan Shopping Center.

"In the 80s I noticed a change in the shopping patterns," Matthews said. "Grocery stores began selling the health and beauty needs that most people had to get from their local pharmacy."

According to Matthews, as that change began to happen, he knew his business would have to go in a different direction. The pharmacy began selling gift items and before long, Matthews said he looked up and noticed something.

"We were a small pharmacy in a gift shop," Matthews said. "That's when I started thinking that some changes needed to be made. I wanted to have that true pharmacy feel back, but I wanted to make the customers happy."

Matthews expanded into a location next door and separated the pharmacy and gift shop into

See HORNE | 9A

## Pipelines

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"The commodity products may be the same, but it's the customer service that makes the difference," he said. "We have a friendly staff that you deal with that's like dealing with a neighborhood friend or family member. When you deal with us, you deal with someone that can be your neighbor. When you deal with a large competitor, you're dealing with someone that probably can't treat you like that."

As a small family business and maintaining a high level of customer service is challenging because of ongoing regulations and tax burdens that come along with it. For Crumpler, sometimes it feels like the regulators think the owner is pocketing all the money. But he said a lot of the funds go back into the company and towards the employees.

"That can be a burden because you're being taxed like you're a member of the 1 percent," he said referring to the wealthiest people in the United States. "You're not a member of the one percent, you're just a small business and you're trying to keep the money in the business to help grow the business, instead of giving it all to the government. That would be the biggest challenge small businesses face today - the increase of regulations put on you as well as the tax burden."

In the future, Crumpler Plastic Pipe may look into producing more products related to plastic and drainage for customer in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. Currently, Crumpler Plastic Pipe offers high-density polyethylene corrugated plastic pipes for non-pressure, gravity drain and corrosion restraint applications. Single wall and dual wall smooth core may be used for engineering plans for a variety of culvert storm sewer and waste water treatment applications. The products may also be used for commercial landscaping or agricultural draining and subsurface irrigation.

The dual wall smooth pipe may be used in situations where a high surge of water release is required and makes downsizing possible in certain situations.

"We hope to grow the products that we offer," he said. "Over the years, we added different sizes and products in the future."

But as far as producing a facility in another states, the business is not interested in opening other facilities. So for now, Roseboro his home - a place they enjoying giving back to. Over the years, Crumpler Plastic Pipe has made contributions to many organizations, churches, schools and individuals dealing with illness.

"It goes along to what we're talking about earlier, a bigger company may not have that ability where you can go and ask them for help versus a family business that's right here in the community," he said.

As a faithful family, he believes the company has a responsibility to help others.

"You have a responsibility from the standpoint of what you're religious beliefs are to be a blessing to other who are less fortunate to help when you can," he said. "You can be on the end of that one day where you need some help yourself and you may need someone to step up and help you. As long as you're help, if you can, you should."

Reach Chase Jordan at 910-249-4617. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd and like us on Facebook.

# Bloomin

From page 1A

she says matter-of-factly, reminding that all interviews stop if her staff or a customer needs her help.

"There's always a priority. "My customers," she says unapologetically, "always come first."

## Starting out

Carr's faith is at the root of all she does, including the business she has built from scratch. In fact, it was a prayer, she is quick to tell anyone who asks, that set her on the path to the long-time career she has enjoyed.

"I started in 1964 out of my house on Park Avenue," she recalled, pointing to a photograph of the home she shared with her husband and three children (Lisa, the baby, would come later), a home that most all her long-time customers will remember frequenting when Carr first put out her shingle. "The business didn't actually get started until '66, but the idea came much sooner."

In the early 60s, the mother of three was working as an instructor at what was then Beaunit on U.S. 421. She was on the swing shift, which meant she often was away from her children at night, something that, over time, began to wear on Carr's mind.

"I didn't like to be away from them, and they needed me near for many reasons," she recalled. "I knew something needed to be done, but I had no idea what."

Prayer, she said, was how she sought answers. "Every decision goes to the Lord," she said matter-of-factly. "It's not about my will but His."

So Carr began praying for a solution. "I would talk to Him on a regular basis and I would pray 'Lord help me, give me something to do that will put food on my table, a roof over our heads and allow me to do for my children as I should.'"

Somewhere along the line, Carr developed an interest in putting flower arrangements together. "I'm not even sure why. I just know all of a sudden I took a real interest in it."

Three flower arrangements later, she encountered an exterminator who had come to her Park Avenue home to assess the residence. While there, he spotted the flowers and, what's more, he liked them.

"It was really out of the blue. He asked me did I make the arrangements and I told him yes. Then he asked me if I would sell them. I didn't even know how to price them, but he wanted them so badly I finally said I would give them up for ten dollars apiece. He took all three."

That set Carr on fire.

"It was like something ignited inside me. It's really hard to explain, but suddenly all I wanted to do was make arrangements. I was obsessed with doing it. When I was off, that's all I would do is make arrangements. I even started putting together silk wreaths. I was making so many, I started putting them in the living room."

Then Carr said "out of the blue" a guy from Crumpler-Honeycutt Funeral Home stopped by her house one day saying he was in need of a silk wreath and had heard she was making them. "He had forgotten to order one and he seemed desperate to get one."

She showed him what she had, and the gentleman bought two. With three arrangements and two wreaths sold, Carr was in business, though she still didn't realize what was unfolding right before her very eyes.

"I just kept praying that prayer. I didn't realize the Lord was already answering it."

With a love of flower arranging piercing through her veins now, Carr sought the advice and help of Vinnie Hobbs, who lived near her and worked at Jewel Malpass' florist. "I really needed some advice from someone in the business so I asked Vinnie to come take a look at what I was making. She really couldn't believe I had done it all myself. Vinnie really helped me a lot."

Now armed with confidence in her new-found abilities and filled with faith that God was leading her in a new direction, Carr gave her notice at Beaunit, opting to stay home with her children and try her hand at the business for which she was now falling in love.

"I put up a sign in front of my house and I started getting trade pretty soon after that. The rest, as they say, is history."

Carr smiles at the memory, and leans forward in her chair, propping thin elbows on the table. She looks into the distance and nods. "God has had his hand in this from the start. Without Him, none of this would have been possible. I prayed that prayer and He answered that prayer. And here I am."

## Edna's Florist

The Park Avenue florist flourished, with Carr's customer base growing at every turn. From silk wreaths and fresh-cut arrangements to roses in bud vases, people were asking for it all, and Edna was meeting the orders, her family — daughters Carolyn and Elizabeth and sons Larry and Frankie — by her side, helping at every turn.

"All my children leaned how to do it. They weren't always that thrilled about it. They were teenagers and had things they wanted to do, but they knew the florist work had to come first. We'd all roll up our shirtsleeves and get to work. They all knew they couldn't go anywhere until they helped me get the flowers out."

It instilled a strong work ethic in the Carr children and it brought joy to their mom's heart to have them close at hand, helping her to make the business the success it soon became.

"Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, we'd be up to all hours, thorning roses, getting things ready. This was, and is, a family business, and my children knew when there were flowers to be fixed ...fixing flowers was what they all had to do."

Love of the business pulses through the Carr children's veins even today, with Lisa still working alongside her mom, and grandchildren Tamra, Sara and Daphne chipping in to help. Daughter Carolyn has a florist in Garland; and daughter Elizabeth works in a florist, The Vine and Branch, in Four Oaks. They all, Carr is quick to acknowledge, make their mom and grandma very proud.

"They learned it early and it stuck with them. I recall all the times they've been called upon to help. They didn't always like it much then, but that's what instilled their love for it."

On what she called "big holidays" like Valentine's, even son Frankie would take off work two or three days to help them get the orders ready. "Everyone pitched in because that's just what we did. This was a family business and it took the whole family to ensure its success."

It was nothing, Carr recalled, to put in 50 hours or more in a week, sometimes a whole lot more. Weekends and even vacations were all timed around holidays, funerals and weddings.

"I remember we were on a family vacation and these three young boys died in a car wreck. One of the family's refused to have their son's funeral until we could get back and I could do the flowers. Now that's very humbling, when people care about what you do so much, when they want your work."

Edna's Florist remained at the Park Avenue location until 1973, the year her youngest daughter, Lisa, was born. They moved that year to the 300 Beamon Street location, where they remained until the latest move, in 2006, to the new building at 227 McKoy St.

Each move, Carr said, was part of the Lord's plan.

"His hand has been in this from the start. In good times and bad, my Lord has been right here with me. He is the reason I've been successful."

Even her customers, she believes, were brought to her by God's divine plan. And those customers, she will tell you, are in no small measure the reason for her continued success. "I love them all. They have been good to me through the years, and I have tried to return that goodness by giving them good service, quality products and the best of myself."

Like her other children, as Lisa grew up, she, too, became a part of the florist family. In fact, Carr calls her the artist of the bunch, noting that it was Lisa's creativity that made her — and the florist business — a trendsetter in the county. "She was our artist. Lisa is the one who started doing speciality items, like funeral wreaths with a telephone and the words 'Jesus Calling' inscribed on a ribbon. They were themed-pieces that were unique and very popular. They still are today. We do a little bit of everything — dogs, anchors, guitars, race cars."

And it was all, Carr emphasizes, to please the customer and to honor or memorialize a loved one in a special way. "Everything we have done and continue to do is for our customers. We want them happy with what we provide. Pleasing our customers is the main thing. There's really nothing we wouldn't tackle." Carr chuckles. "Honestly we will try anything."

That's the way it's been from the start and, Carr is adamant it will remain so until the last day she walks into the building. "It's always been my aim. They are the reason I've been successful so why wouldn't I do everything I can to make sure they are satisfied?"

## Working through the pain

Carr's faith has remained strong throughout her life, even during what she calls her "darkest days." Her work, too, she said, helped to keep her going when, many times, she just wanted to stop.

One of them came early in life when she lost a child not long after its birth. But as painful as that tragedy was, when Carr's son, Frankie, was killed in February 1998, she felt what she termed true devastation. "Burying a baby is very, very hard, but burying a grown child, now that is difficult ... it's a pain you cannot describe. Unless you've been in those shoes you have no way of knowing how hard."

But her faith and her work allowed Carr to keep putting one foot in front of the other. "I knew the Lord wouldn't want me to sit in the corner and just give up, so I put my trust in Him. Somehow, some way, I got through the storm. My family was there for me, my customers were there for me and my Lord never left my side.

"Being able to work made a difference, too. It helped get my mind off of what happened, at least for a little while."

And eventually, Carr found her way out of the tunnel and back into the light.

She also credits her talented florist family, some blood kin, others heart kin, for helping pull her out of the weeds.

"We're all family around here," she said, nodding at employee Connie Miller who is busy putting the finishing touches on a vased filled with breathtakingly beautiful roses. "They all call me grandma, even if I'm actually not their grandma."

Carr sighs and touches her hand to her heart. "They are all very, very special, one of the reasons I love this so much. They have made the good times better and the bad times bearable ... that's for sure. I am blessed ... blessed beyond measure."

## Celebrating 50 years

In October 2015, Carr celebrated her 50th anniversary in the florist business, a celebration her family and employees say will continue the entire year. In many ways, she will tell you, it's been a short five decades, yet in others it has seemed a lifetime filled with love and adventures, trials and tribulations.

"I have loved this business all the way through, 50 years of it," Carr attests, glancing around the building laden with both real and silk flowers, her staff hard at work assembling arrangements, taking phone orders and greeting walk-in customers."

She loves it so much, in fact, that even at 77 she still puts in about 48 hours a week. She doesn't do as much flower arranging as she once did, she admits, showing off her hands and grimacing. "Arthritis has worked on these hands of mine. I can't do as much as I used to, or as much as I'd like to, but I still do a whole lot."

That includes dickering with the flower guys who bring her blossoms by the truck load, and her staff when they try to get her to slow down.

"That's not going to happen," daughter Lisa acknowledges. "Mama's got to have her hands in all this. It's what she loves ... and we love that she loves it."

Employee Sandi Freeman agrees. "Mrs. Edna is this business. She's going to be here every time the doors are open, you can believe that."

Carr grins, acknowledging what they say really is the gospel.

"That prayer I prayed back 50 years or so ago, that's the success of this business. It was then and it still is today. I love coming to work every day, but that's because the Lord has seen to it that my love of this business has stuck with me."

And it has.

"I have no regrets," Carr attests, a steely glint flashing across her eyes. She points heavenward. "I plan to work right here until He says it's time to stop ... and that's fine with me."

Sherry Matthews is publisher and editor of The Sampson Independent. She can be reachedat at 910-249-4612. Follow her on Twitter @sieditor1960; follow the paper @SampsonInd and like us on Facebook.

Sherry Matthews|Sampson Independent

**Edna Carr shows off some of the early photos of her inside the first Edna's Florist, one she operated from her home on Park Avenue.**

Sherry Matthews|Sampson Independent

**From the first moment she assembled her first flower arrangement, Edna Carr said she was hooked. 'I've been doing it ever since, and I have no regrets. This is where God led me,' she attested.**

Sherry Matthews|Sampson Independent

**Now in her 50th year in the florist business, Edna Carr points to her faith in God and his direction as the reasons for her success through the years. Sherry Matthews|Sampson Independent**

Courtesy photo

**A younger Edna Carr works to tie a bow in the second of her three shops, this one on Beamon Street.**

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Courtesy photo

**James Ezzell started the family trucking business in 1951 and it is now run by his son, Grover Ezzell.**

# Trucking through the generations

## Ezzell family leading transporting industry

**By Kristy D. Carter**
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Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent

**Carrying on the Ezzell family name, Catherin Ezzell, Grover Ezzell and Louise Ezzell continue to work in a third generations business, Ezzell Trucking in Harrells.**

Courtesy photo

**Ezzell Trucking has been in the family business for more than 50 years.**

Three generations of the Ezzell family have been leading one of North Carolina's larger trucking businesses for more than 50 years.

Founded in 1951 by James A. Ezzell, who was an entrepreneur and jack of all trades, Ezzell got into trucking after he owned a mink farm, turkey farm, hog farm, raised goats and even ventured into the gas business as an owner for a short period of time.

According to Catherine Ezzell, third generation of the family, who heads the Human Resource department now at Ezzell Trucking, her grandfather first got into trucking when he was trying to find a reliable trucker to haul his turkeys to the market. When he found none, he decided to do it himself. Once his neighbors saw what he was doing, they asked him to take their turkeys as well. From that, Ezzell Trucking was born in southern Sampson County, in Harrells, where it continues to be today.

"It's been a long road for Ezzell Trucking, Inc. since my grandfather started the company with one truck in 1951," Catherine said. "And for most of that extended stretch, the trucks weren't hauling wood products. The first commodity the company founder transported was live turkeys. Nearly two decades later, in 1969, Ezzell expanded into the refrigerated food business, and later into the dry van business. It wasn't until 1990, nearly 40 years after its founding, that the trucking outfit made its first turn towards wood fiber when it started a relationship with International Paper, hauling wood chips. Another 20 years down the line, in 2010, Ezzell Trucking began transporting 100 percent forest products."

According to Catherine, the learning curve for moving into forest products was not as steep as an outsider might have guessed because the transition had already been taking place so gradually over two decades.

"When we made the decision to go 100 percent (forest products), probably 50-60 percent of our gross revenues had transitioned already," noted Grover Ezzell, second generation and current CEO. "The real concern was as to how quickly the company could grow back to its previous levels while only hauling forest products."

Grover said that question became a moot point thanks to the rise of Enviva Pellets in eastern North Carolina. Enviva is the largest manufacturer of wood pellets in the United States. Ezzell Trucking started with Enviva at the Ahoskie plant in 2011 and in 2012 at the Garysburg plant. Enviva is one of four major customers for Ezzell, along with IP, Georgia-Pacific and Weyerhaeuser. The trucking company also hauls to and from some smaller mills. Looking ahead, the Ezzell family is excited that the trucking company has been awarded a new contract with the new Enviva plant in Faison, set to start March 2016.

Currently working for Ezzell Trucking is Grover, the youngest son of founder James Ezzell. He started working with his father in the summer during his college years as a truck driver carrying loads cross-country. In fact, Grover continues to hold a CDL and drives trucks from time to time. After graduating from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a bachelor's degree in business administration, he officially joined the Ezzell team in 1977. He has worked in a variety of roles during his tenure, including office manager, safety director, executive vice president, president, and since 2004, as CEO.

"Being a second generation owner, I've been 'trucking' all my life," Grover said. "I'm so fortunate to work in a family business because it provides me an opportunity to be a positive influence to our employees, customers as well as our community. Being in this position has its ups and downs but as I reflect on the past, there is little I would change. As we look ahead, the future is unlimited. Thanks be to God."

Grover's wife, Louise, has served in many support roles since 1982. She holds a degree in home economics from Radford University and a master's degree in textiles from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She works in the accounting department as accounting manager and helps keep many of the daily operations running smoothly.

"Our family is greater than the three of us who work at this company," Louise said. "We are made up of 150 team members who service our customers and this community. A special thanks goes to our professional drivers who are the life blood of our company."

Grover and Louise's eldest daughter, Catherine, is the human resource manager and joined the team in 2013. She received her BSBA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her MBA at Wake Forest University. Leading Ezzell's ever-evolving recruiting strategy, she is tasked with the challenge of finding the team of qualified, professional drivers.

"Joining the family business a few years ago has been a blessing, and I'm passionate about the work we do as a company," Catherine said. "I work with a great team including my parents, our office staff, and our professional drivers. I often get the question, 'What is it like to work with your parents?' My answer is always, 'It's great!' We work well together, with each person offering a different point of view."

Reach Kristy D. Carter at 910-592-8137, ext. 2588. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd. Like us on Facebook.


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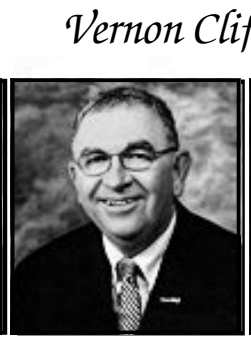
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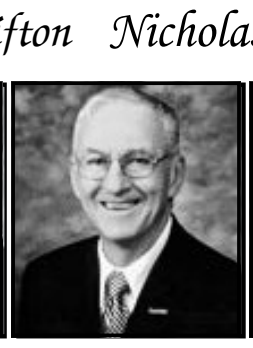
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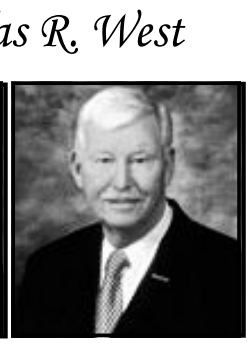
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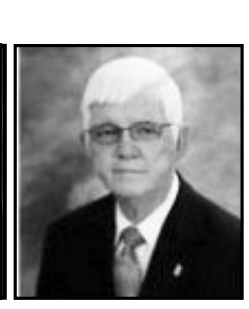
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We at Royal Hall Funeral Home, believe that a funeral service should be as unique as the life it commemorates. Some come to us to pre-plan arrangements, because we offer options and choices that one would desire. Others come to us during their difficult time seeking guidance and support. We are dedicated to serving families in their time of need.

# Economic stability through the generations

When considering Sampson County's economic heritage the word "generations" certainly comes to mind. Our county's agriculture, agri-manufacturing, agribusiness, manufacturing and business sectors all have homegrown family success stories. We are fortunate to have local families who have been great contributors to the economies of our communities and county.

**John Swope**
Sampson EDC

Several of our Sampson County companies have or are currently making significant investments in their local businesses, including two of our industries, Prestage Farms and Brooks Brothers.

Prestage AgEnergy of NC, LLC is constructing a poultry litter power plant at their existing Moltonville feed mill. This new facility will offer an alternative to land application of poultry litter as well as provide very attractive employment and other economic benefits to our area. We are very appreciative of companies like Prestage Farms and their continued commitments to Sampson County.

Brooks Brothers Clinton Distribution Center is adding jobs and investing in new equipment and building renovations. As the USA's oldest clothing retailer, Brooks Brothers will celebrate its 200th year in 2018. With its heritage and history Brooks Brothers is an American icon. We are proud to have one of the company's two U.S. distribution centers and only U.S. dress shirt manufacturing plant in Sampson County and to be part of the Brooks Brothers family.

When we look at the new companies that we are welcoming into Sampson County we can once again refer to the term Generations. Below are several examples.

The Enviva Pellets Sampson, LLC plant's construction is expected be completed within 45-60 days. This plant has multi-year customer sales contracts for their wood pellets and the plant is designed for multi-decade operations. With their investment, employment and regional purchases they will have an economic impact on the region, including our timber industry. Our Sampson County plant will be part of Enviva's family of production facilities.

The Rheinfelden-Americas, LLC plant is a joint venture of two major international manufacturing corporations, Rheinfelden Semis of Germany and CCL Industries of Canada. The Clinton plant has begun growing their employment and starting their plant modernization investment. Rheinfelden Semis is a major European producer of aluminum slugs and brings their experience at producing aluminum slugs to this partnership. CCL Industries is a major producer of aluminum specialty packaging products and will be the significant customer for this local plant. Their partnership in our Rheinfelden-Americas plant should see many years of productivity here.

Novi Energy should start construction on their two Sampson County agriculture waste biomass power plants during 2016. The design of these plants is for a long-term operational life which will be beneficial to our agriculture community for many years.

Kansas City Sausage Company's plans to construct a pork sausage production facility in Sampson County with their joint venture partner Smithfield Foods. Once in production this plant will be a great addition to the County and regions swine industry, including offering new market opportunities to our hog growers.

The plans of Carolina Cellulosic Biofuels, LLC (Chemtex) to construct a biofuels production facility in Sampson County will be a great benefit to our areas farmers. This plant will utilize no food crops as their feedstock, rather specialty grasses that our farmers will grow. With their investment, employment and regional purchases this new plant will have a significant economic impact on this area.

Looking at the employment, wages and investment numbers of these eight plants we see they will have a significant economic impact on our county and municipalities.

**Employment & Wages:** These seven employers will create 463 new jobs with an annual average salary of $37,000, which will be 17 percent above our county's 2015 average wage. That number of jobs at that average wage will create $17,131,612 in annual new wages for this region, mostly for Sampson County. And, we should not forget the indirect economic impact these direct hire jobs and wages will have, creating additional employment opportunities.

**Investments & Tax Revenue:** The total taxable investment of these plants will be $419,642,176, which will represent a 10 percent increase in Sampson County's tax base. After grant back incentives are provided these companies will pay Sampson County a combined total of $14,657,462 in property taxes during their first 10-years of operations.

**Regional Purchases:** When existing companies expand or new companies locate they make new purchases in the area that in-turn further stimulates the local economies. The Enviva Pellets Sampson and Carolina Cellulosic Biofuels plants combined will annually make purchases between $47 million and $50 million in the region, mostly in energy grasses and wood debris feedstock. These purchases will benefit our farmers and timber owners which sell to these companies.

**Leadership Support:** A very important part of encouraging each of these companies to grow within Sampson County was the leadership provided by the pro-business Sampson County Board of Commissioners and the Clinton City Council. The Commissioners supported each of the above economic development projects while the City Council has induced three of the above projects to grow within the city. Their actions resulted in new well-paying jobs and taxable property investments.

In summary, we are fortunate to have existing companies that are not only outstanding industrial, agriculture and business neighbors but also great employers. We are also fortunate to have new companies that will become part of our Sampson County communities and themselves creating new jobs and other economic benefits. Economic development is a mainstay of the quality of life of all of our generations. Let's keep striving to create opportunities and improved quality of life for our Sampson County families.

John Swope is the executive director of the Sampson County Economic Development Commission. His office can be reached at 910-592-8921.

## Dr. Jeffrey Bell, D.D.S., P. L. L. C

Dr. Jeffrey Bell is a graduate of NC State University and UNC-Chapel Hill School of Dentistry. He has been practicing in Clinton for six years. He was born and raised in Clinton. He is married and has two children, Macy (3) and Avett (1).

The practice is very excited about their big change in 2016. On Mar. 1, plans are made to break ground for their brand new office! The new office will be located at the corner of North Boulevard and Jasper Street (in front of Food Lion). Dr. Bell feels like the new office will increase his patients experience and hopefully make them more comfortable. The office should be completed in December 2016 and they plan to start 2017 in the brand new office.

Dr. Bell and his staff focus on providing top notch dentistry in a family setting. Any dental service that you might need, they can provide. This could consist of maintaining and keeping your families teeth healthy or completely changing your smile.

## Horne

From page 8A

two spaces. Before long, Matthews admitted, he looked up and the gift shop had grown so much, the pharmacy was just a small business inside something larger.

"That's when I knew we needed separate locations," Matthews shared. "I wanted to give families something that could help them. That's where the idea for the drive thru came from."

As a child, growing up, Matthew said he worked with his father and he knew pharmacy was something he wanted to continue.

"I just had a passion for it and helping other people," Matthews said. "I love this community and I wanted to come back here and work."

Matthews is and his wife have two children and four grandchildren. He is active in many aspects of the community, working with the Kiwanis, the chamber and is a strong supporter of the schools.

"All the opportunities I have had are a blessing," Matthews said. "I want to give back to the community that has given to me and my family for so many years."

Reach Kristy D. Carter at 910-592-8137, ext. 2588. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd. Like us on Facebook.

## Burney's

From page 5A

those special holidays, like birthdays and anniversaries.

Not only does the family base their life on their Christian faith, the business is run with a Christ-filled atmosphere.

Denise added, if customers come in and leave not feeling the Christ-centered family orientation, they as a business haven't achieved their goal.

Throughout the store and store's designs, you'll see a bluebird —a memorial tribute of Dawn Cannady, the sister Denise and Cindi lost to cancer several years ago. The bluebird has been incorporated in many ways throughout the business, from the logo to the decor. This is just one of the many ways Cindi and Denise want to remind the community of the love they shared with their sister and the love they have for their family.

For both sisters, this new endeavor is a dream coming to light.

"We both had dreams and when we put our dreams together, along with the Burneys, it just made everything that much sweeter," Cindi said.

Business isn't the only thing the family does together. Each family has a house at White Lake, just down the road from each other, and they spend many weekends, holidays and vacations at the lake, with each other.

"We spend a lot of time cooking out and relaxing," Denise said.

The girls in the family like going on shopping adventures and outings together when they aren't busy working.

The future for both Cindi and Denise includes Burney's and continuing to work as a family.

"We hope the younger generation will continue running this when we decide to really retire," Cindi said.

Some of the goodies and desserts from Burney's have made trips around the world. Both Cindi and Denise say they will ship their product, but it can be costly. They have had many customers come into the bakery and pick up a box of croissants to go. The Burney's brand, and Cindi and Denise's names, have made their way all over, including South America and Hawaii.

Along the wall inside the bakery, Denise and Cindi put photos of the family surrounded by these words: "Christ ... the center of our home, a guest at every meal, a silent listener in every conversation."

"We want this to be what people leave here talking about," Denise said. "The photos on the wall have opened many conversations."

Reach Kristy D. Carter at 910-592-8137, ext. 2588. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd. Like us on Facebook.

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent
**Sisters Cindi Norris and Denise Scronce opened Burney's and run the bakery like a true family business, involving everyone they can.**

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent
**The blue bird that is painted on the tree is a daily reminder of the love the Burney's family has for sister Dawn Cannady.**

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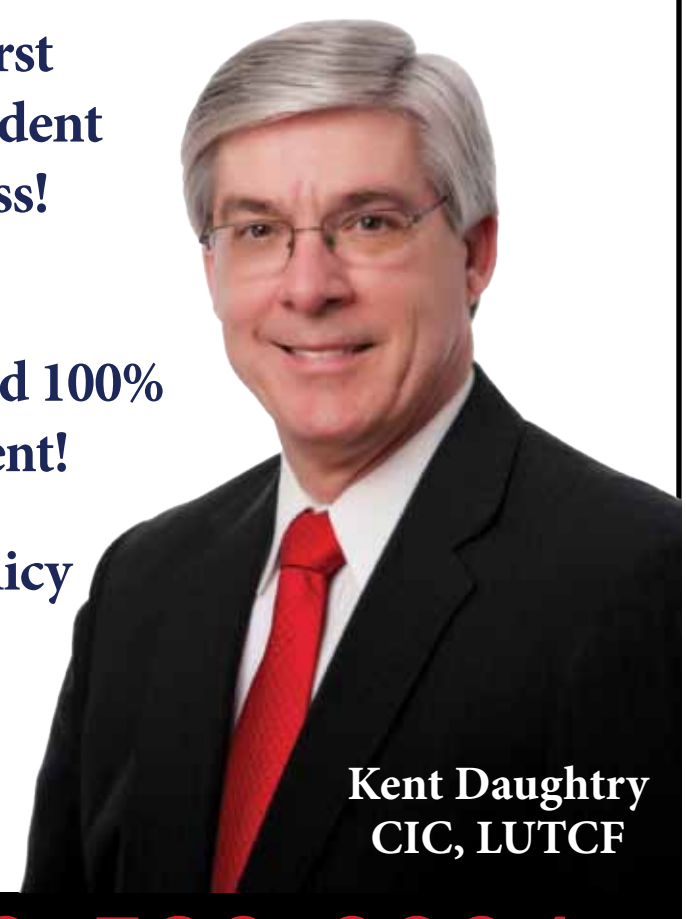

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# United Way works to improve Sampson's quality of life

**By Nancy Carr**
UW Executive Director

### Who We Are

United Way of Sampson County (UWSC) is a non-profit organization that partners with local agencies and programs to improve the quality of life for residents living in our community. The organization raises funds and invests in community programs that provide a measurable, positive impact. When businesses and individuals give to United Way of Sampson County they can be confident that their donation stays here to directly help friends and neighbors in need. As a result of the generous donations given over the years, UWSC has directly invested approximately $3 million dollars in Sampson County.

UWSC is governed by a board of local volunteers consisting of civic leaders and community advocates. The 2016 Board of Directors include: President, Shawn Purvis; Vice President, Dr. Stuart Blount; Treasurer, Dempsey Craig; Secretary, Janet Sargent; Past President, Sherrill Allen, Janna Bass, Sarah Bradshaw, Kenny Cabral, Patty Cherry, Enrique Coello, Catherine Ezzell, Rev. Thomas Farrow, Jerry Heinzman, Gary Mac Herring, Summer Lanier, Sherry Matthews, Dottie McCullen and Susan Warren. UWSC's low overhead makes it one of the most efficient charitable organizations not only in our county, but across the nation.

Our 2015 partner agencies included: Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program which provides mammograms for underinsured at-risk women; Boy Scouts of America Tuscarora Council Champion Program which focuses on children with special needs and the STEM program; Clinton Area Foundation for Education educational enrichment grants; Delta Sigma Theta mentoring program, Fitness Renaissance Program which helps fight childhood obesity; Girl Scouts North Carolina Coastal Pines local outreach program; Sampson County Child Advocacy Center which assists victims of child sexual and physical abuse; Sampson County 4H; Sampson County Fireman's Association Fire Safety Education Program; Sampson County Friends of Education educational enrichment grants; Sampson County Special Olympics, and the Department of Aging Wheelchair Ramp Program. The 2016 partner agencies will be announced in late February.

Every year UWSC conducts a fall campaign and encourages individuals and businesses to invest in our community by giving to UWSC. We thank everyone for their support in reaching 100 percent of our $175,000 goal this year. The board serves as a steward of these funds by carefully reviewing each agency that applies for funding. Agencies must comply with our rigorous audit policies and other guidelines to ensure all donations are used wisely and judiciously.

Courtesy photo
**Every year United Way of Sampson County encourages individuals and businesses to invest in the community.**

### Who We Serve

Did you know that one in every three residents in Sampson County is touched by United Way of Sampson County?

We help Sampson County Special Olympics provide children with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to compete in the local Special Olympics Spring Games as well enable qualified athletes to attend and compete at the Special Olympics North Carolina Summer Games.

We help the Sampson County Child Advocacy Center provide victims of child sexual abuse and physical injuries a child-friendly place in which important interviews and medical exams are performed.

We help the Boy Scout's Champion program provide important life skills to special needs children in our schools and enables them to attend the annual "Fun Day" at Camp Tuscarora. We also support their STEM program which promotes the education of science, technology, engineering and math to our youth.

We help Girl Scouts widen their outreach efforts to bring character and self-esteem building programs to school aged girls across the county who due to financial or transportation barriers are unable to join a traditional troop.

We help CAFÉ and Friends of Education provide engaging and stimulating educational enrichment through innovative equipment, books, experiments, etc. to school children across Sampson County.

We help fill in the gaps when state and federal grant funding falls short by enabling the Sampson County Health Department's Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Awareness program to provide life-saving mammograms to underprivileged and/or underinsured women.

We help Sampson County 4-H bring hands on learning experiences which teach leadership, citizenship, science, life skills, and responsibility to many of our community's youth.

We help promote fire safety by providing all the fire safety education material which the Sampson County Fireman's Association distributes during Fire Prevention Week when firefighters visit area schools and

See SAMPSON'S | 13A

# Community support a large part of city schools' success

**By Dr. Stuart Blount**
Superintendent

Clinton City Schools is poised for great success in 2016 due in part to the tremendous community support we are allowed to be a part of each day. As we reflect on what 2015 brought us, we remain focused on what 2016 has to offer our students, teachers, staff and parents. We are blessed to be a part of a community which supports public education without reservation. Regardless of the dynamics of outside influences, our community supports what our teachers do each day in their classrooms and on behalf of the employees of Clinton City Schools – THANK YOU.

**Stuart Blount**
Contributing Columnist

Clinton City Schools continues to strive for excellence in the classroom environment. We remain focused on solid instructional practices which will allow our students to grow academically. At the elementary level, our teachers, in conjunction, with our K-5 curriculum coach have developed the Above and Beyond structure – an application of reading comprehension skills. It is through reading structures such as these that our students hone in on their reading skills. We have also implemented DAILY 5, a framework for reading instruction. We are experiencing success with both of these and our teachers have embraced these concepts with fidelity. At the middle school level, our teachers continue to align instructional practices to better serve the needs of our middle school students. The team teaching concept is alive and well at Sampson Middle School. And finally, at Clinton High School, our students are experiencing ACT prep sessions, a better aligned Advanced Placement curriculum and a variety of Career and Technical Education courses, to name a few. The partnership we have with Sampson Community College through the College and Career Promise agreement exposes our high school students to college level courses. This partnership allows our students to obtain college level credit as well as high school credit for the courses they take at Sampson Community College.

Clinton City Schools provides a variety of extra-curricular activities for our students. Our athletic sports teams have experienced success thus far in the school year and we are confident that the spring sports season will bring additional success for our student-athletes and our community. We offer an array of clubs and organizations for our students to gain leadership experience which will help them as they leave us following graduation. Our band program at Clinton High is experiencing growth in numbers of which we are very proud of.

During the past school year (2014-2015), the 2015 senior class received over 3.5 million dollars in scholarships and posted a graduation rate of 89.5 percent. Our teachers and staff received over $73,000 in grants to improve the educational experiences for our students.

As we look to the future, we plan to increase the number of our middle school elective course offerings and Career Technology Education (CTE) course offerings. We also plan to continue with the practice of aligning instructional practices from pre-K to grade 12 to ensure that our students are very well prepared for life after high school. As we prepare our students each day for what the unknown future will bring, we look forward to the continued community support we have experienced each year. The future of Clinton City Schools is bright and we are excited to be a part of a community who values all that is GREAT with public education in North Carolina!

Dr. Stuart Blount is superintendent of Clinton City Schools.

Foundation Directors Amelia Surratt and Holden Dubose working the phones at the annual SCC Foundation Phoneathon.

# Successful annual SCC Foundation Phoneathon

**By Dan Grubb**
SCC

"The annual Phoneathon sets aside a night each year where Foundation representatives and the College's faculty, staff and students thank our community partners for the special relationship they enjoy with our students" states Dr. Bill Starling, Sampson Community College VP of Academic Affairs as he discusses the upcoming SCC Phoneathon. Starling continues, "It's one of the best grassroots events where a cross section of the community turns out to perform, to call, and to celebrate this special relationship. As we often say, we are a 'community' college."

Quickly approaching on March 15, from 6 pm to 8 pm, hundreds of community members will pledge to support the Sampson Community College Foundation with the purpose to raise money for scholarships and academic programs and to share success stories of SCC with the community. Starting in 1987, after Foundation was established in 1986, this event was held on campus for many years before partnering with Star Telephone and its predecessors in the late 90's. In 2010, the event was filmed and aired later, but since 2011 it has been a live television event.

Foundation President Lyman Horne noted, "Our annual Phoneathon is an excellent vehicle to share the work of our local community college, showcase local talent, as well as provide a vehicle for all in the community to participate in the success of this great institution, Sampson Community College."

During this live broadcast on StarVision, Sampson Community college staff, faculty, students, alumni, trustees and Foundation directors come together to call upon the community for their monetary support. The live broadcast includes scholarship testimonials, stories of impact and local talent. Throughout the event, over 100 volunteers collaborate to ensure this event has a strong impact to the current and prospective students at Sampson Community College. "The Phonathon would not be possible without the overwhelming commitment of Lyman Horne and Star Communications" includes Lisa Turlington, Executive Director of the SCC Foundation. "The entire production is orchestrated by Chris Heuer and his amazing team of Jason Miller, Craig Bell and Billy Brewington. They dedicate several days to the project and we are lucky to have Star as a Foundation partner!"

"If you've not previously tuned into the Phoneathon, I'd encourage you to do so on March 15" includes Foundation Vice President Bill Fulton. "You'll be amazed at the level of our area talent, impressed by the comments from some of our local leaders, and maybe even amused at how folks like myself can make a mere thirty seconds in front of a camera a hit-or-miss proposition. But it's all in great fun and for an even greater cause. I hope you'll check us out on Mar. 15 and make a pledge in support of SCC."

If you would like to volunteer to assist with the 2016 SCC Foundation Phoneathon, please call Lisa Turlington, Executive Director at 910-592-8081 or e-mail lturlington@sampsoncc.edu. As the event is approaching, check the SCC Foundation Facebook page for specific details of talent and local interviews, https://www.facebook.com/Sampson-CommunityCollegeFoundation/.

But it's all in great fun and for an even greater cause.

## Sampson's

From page 11A

teach about "stop, drop and roll".

We help fight childhood obesity by promoting exercise and nutrition through the Fitness Renaissance Program offered to our county's elementary school children.

We help provide much needed funding to the Department of Aging to build wheelchair ramps for disabled individuals under the age of 60.

### Where to Go for Help

The 2-1-1 Call Center for Sampson County provides all residents a tool to find human service programs and agencies available in our area. This service is free and operates 24 hours a day, every day. Calls are answered by experienced referral specialists who speak all languages. Simply dial 2-1-1 from any cell phone or landline, or access the information via our website www.sampsonunitedway.org or www.nc211.org.

### How to Become a Partner Agency

In general, any county human service program or agency that is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization is eligible to apply for funding. Our funding cycle occurs once a year. Every October, the application is available on our website www.unitedwaysampson.org under "Agency Resources" for the following year's funding cycle. We host an annual Application Workshop as well to assist agencies in the application and process. Typically applications are due the first week in January and then qualified agencies are invited to present at the board allocation meetings later that month. Final decisions regarding allocations for that year's funding cycle are made in late February.

### Live United for a Better Tomorrow

We hope that the residents of Sampson County share our vision and will continue to be part of improving the quality of life in our community. Please remember to "Give Where You Live" and invest in Sampson County. Our motto is Give, Advocate and Volunteer. If you would like to get involved or receive more information about United Way of Sampson County, please contact us at 910-592-4263. Together, we can inspire hope and create opportunities for a better tomorrow. LiveUnited.

# NC Granite and Marble: A family business

**By Adam Capps**
acapps@civitasmedia.com

Adam Capps/Sampson Independent

**Quincy Edgerton of NC Granite and Marble.**

**The sign at the entrance of NC Marble and Granite, a sign they created.**

**A creation by NC Marble and Granite, outside of their offices in Clinton.**

Ever since the time he was a little boy, Quincy Edgerton has known that he wanted to do something in the granite and marble industry.

His great grandfather had a monument business back in the 1930s, and eventually, around 1960, Mr. Carson Edge, and Quincy's grandfather, E.C. Edgerton Sr., opened up North Carolina Marble and Granite in Clinton.

"I was in the 4th grade," said Quincy Edgerton. "We were originally from the Godwin area, but my dad and uncle came to work here at the place my grandfather really started. It has basically been a family business ever since, and we have all had to chip and help each other out to make things work like they need to."

Edgerton currently runs the business, while his mother, 85 year old, Mary Edgerton, still works there and enjoys it greatly. His son, Jeremy, and his wife, Amanda, also work at NC Marble and Granite. Other workers at NC Marble and Granite include Wilbert Best, Stanley Fennell, Becky Mercer, John Yancey and Jessie Banks.

Best began working at the same time Quincy did, and has been there ever since.

"He has been on the ride with me the whole time," said Edgerton. "We are glad to still have people here that have been here as long as we can remember."

Among those other people who are working at NC Marble and Granite that have been there for quite some time, are Yancey and Banks. The two have been there over 30 years, per Edgerton, and still play a huge roll in the company's success and operations.

"John (Yancey) and Jessie (Banks) have been a great asset to this company," continued Edgerton in praising those who work by his side. "I am proud to have had them work here and appreciate everything they do. They are usually the fellas who go out and install what we have made."

NC Marble and Granite is located on Hwy. 701, just passed Dairy Queen if one is traveling South from Clinton. There is an office building, and designs in the side-yard for potential customers to see for themselves.

Back to the current patriarch of the company, Quincy Edgerton graduated from Clinton High School in 1969. He left Clinton and went to Guilford College, where he graduated with a degree in Business. After graduation, he almost immediately came back to work in the marble and granite industry with his father in Clinton.

"It was a requirement for me to get a degree of some sort," smiled Edgerton. "My dad always said that I had to get some sort of degree, and looking back that is something that I am glad of and very proud of. I walked across that stage on graduation day, and I tell people that I left the stage, got in the car and left. I didn't leave quite that quick, but I was ready to get back and start working in this business. I knew there was a lot of opportunity here, and it has been great to my family and I."

North Carolina Marble and Granite makes many different objects and monuments, but they are mostly tasked with making tombstones. Each year, the company averages making around 1,000 monuments. It is estimated that they have made between 55,000 and 60,000 monuments of all kinds since the company's inception in 1960, but there was no absolute number of exactly how many had been constructed.

In mentioning that the majority of the work was in grave markers and tombstones, Edgerton went on to say that it is nice to be able to help a family who has just lost a loved one begin the healing process, and to help them remember that loved one in one way or another. He also said that some stones can tell a story, and really characterize what a person was like during their life.

"It is one of the nice things about doing this," said Edgerton. "I am not saying it's nice the circumstance that people have to come here, but it is nice to be able to help them remember their loved one. We can do whatever we want them too, really. I always try to get as much information about what they want as possible, so I am always asking a lot of questions when they come in. We want to make sure that the fallen life is honored in the best way possible, and that the family is satisfied in what we do."

Through the years, Edgerton mentioned that there have been some small changes in the way that things are done in the granite and marble industry. Used to, Edgerton said that his father and grandfather would use a wooden stake and mallet to engrave monuments. Now, the process is computerized.

"It is crazy to think about how far even this process has came since we started back then, but just like everything, we have to adjust and do what is the most efficient," admitted Edgerton. "These days, Amanda, my daughter in law, is able to design the lettering and whatever needs to be engraved by using a system on the computer. It is a lot easier these days for sure," smiled Edgerton.

The company still buys the granite slabs, cuts them, polishes them, and shapes them. After this, they are lettered, and then they perform their own installation, which gives them more flexibility.

"With us doing our own installation, it allows us to go back in and change something if it needs to be changed," he said. "We are, more times than you would probably expect, in a situation where what the person wants on a stone or monument changes after the time that we have designed it via the computer, but before the time that it is installed to its designated site. If we had another party installing our monuments, we would have to worry with their time and scheduling if such an event arises."

Another change that

See GRANITE | 16A

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# How baby boomers are changing healthcare

**By Jill Cairney**

Aging- it is a term most of us do not ever want to hear. But let's face it, we all get old - we all age. Aging isn't a process that changes our need for healthcare, rather it changes the parameters of the healthcare we need. Frequency of physician visits, increase in medications, and changes in reasons for hospital stays-these are just a few examples how the parameters of the healthcare needs for the aging population are changing.

The aging population, specifically the aging baby boomer population, began hitting retirement age in 2011. The US Census Bureau categorizes the baby boomer age group as individuals born between 1946 and 1964. An average of 3 million baby boomers will hit retirement age every year for the next 15 years. It is estimated that there are more 75 million Americans who make up the baby boom generation, according to a report released in 2014 by the American College of Nurses.

**Chronic Conditions**

With new baby boomers reaching retirement age daily, healthcare entities are also seeing a growing need for more medical care. Retirees today are managing and treating more chronic conditions than their parents. According to the American Hospital Association, it is expected that when the last baby boomer hits retirement age by 2030, that 37 million baby boomers will be living with more than one chronic condition . To put this in perspective, this will equal six out of every ten boomers.

Until recently, healthcare has been more about treating conditions rather than preventing them. Prevention in healthcare saw its debut in 1984 when the US Preventative Services Task Force was established to provide healthcare professionals advice about prevention. It was not until this point that prevention became an integral component within primary care. By 2030, more than one out of every three Boomers – over 21 million – will be considered obese. (Source: American Hospital Association.)

Even with chronic conditions on the rise, the aging population is living longer. This means that our healthcare systems are managing chronic conditions in patients longer. Aging baby boomers not only want their chronic conditions treated, they want to be healthier than prior generations. Although this demand continues to be met by the medical industry, it is at a cost which places a strain on our healthcare resources, according to Paul Barr, a reporter for the Hospitals and Health Networks.

**Baby Boomers Want More**

The baby boomer generation places a greater demand on the healthcare sector than their parents did. Mr. Barr also reports in his article titled "A Chronic Problem" that as baby boomers confront their medical issues, they want to know more about their providers and have more of a direct impact in decisions about their care. The evolution of technology along with the ability to use internet search engines, social media and online rating sites is empowering boomers in their quest for the best health care. The baby boomer generation has been and continues to be a driving force in advancing health care. Health care systems are responding to this by ensuring they are ready to provide the advances in technology, whether it has been on their own or government initiated.

Education and patient engagement is also a 'hot topic' with the baby boomer population. The internet age has developed a hub for baby boomers who want to stay more informed about health and wellness. Healthcare systems and physician partners nationwide have begun offering educational programs geared toward the baby boomer population and their health. Providing education and information helps increase the population's understanding of services available to them. Sampson Regional Medical Center has responded by offering a program with a free membership, SeniorPlus (Senior+), focused on individuals 60+. The program promotes health and wellness through a variety of activities and social seminars.

> Healthcare systems and physician partners nationwide have begun offering educational programs geared toward the baby boomer population and their health.

"Educational resources for the senior population are so important," stated Robin Palmer, Diabetes Education Program Coordinator at Sampson Regional Medical Center. "Not only have we introduced a fantastic new senior program to help engage our senior population in their health and well-being, but SampsonRMC also offers educational support specific to diabetes, which is a prevalent chronic condition. Being a resource for our residents in Sampson County is very important to us, and we want to continue to offer new educational opportunities through programs such as Senior+. " SampsonRMC's Senior+ provides opportunities to engage with local physicians, socialize with other like-minded seniors, and access to special events that are coordinated by SampsonRMC.

What are some of the trends healthcare systems are facing with the increase in retirees?

Hospitals and healthcare systems are now facing many challenges as they try to meet the demands placed on them by the baby boomer generation. Physician and nurse shortages are seen nationwide, not only due to the rise in the number of baby boomers seeking more medical care, but also because many of those who work within the healthcare industry are reaching retirement age.

This is a simple supply and demand deficit: there is a steady growing need for more providers; however, the supply is not meeting this demand. Physicians and nurses are a vital part of the delivery of care to patients in hospitals, primary care offices, nursing homes, home health agencies, and many other sectors of healthcare. Nursing schools struggle to graduate nurses for the increasing needs of the population in addition to the growing need for replacement nurses, according to the American Association of College of Nursing. Physician residency programs are experiencing the same hardship. Dr. John-Mark Miller, Director of the Graduate Medical Education program at SampsonRMC, explained that in his tenure as a family medicine physician he has seen a steady increase in the need of more primary care services. "Being part of the academic environment, I see new residents starting every year. However, the rate of physician enrollment in family medicine programs is not correlating to the increased need for more family medicine physicians," offered Dr. Miller. According to a recent report released by the Association of American Medical Colleges, family medicine programs will need to train 3,000 more physicians per year to meet the future needs of the aging baby boomer population.

Another factor in recent healthcare trends is the shift in healthcare models from inpatient care to outpatient care. Not only are senior citizens wanting to stay out of hospitals, but insurance companies (and Medicare) also support the outpatient trend. Shorter hospital stays are preferred, as well as care at home, when it can be offered. Hospitals and other healthcare agencies are increasingly working with primary care providers to keep senior citizens at home, rather than having them admitted for long-term stays.

With the demands of the baby boomer population changing, the entire healthcare industry will continue reshaping care delivery models. Healthcare as a whole will rely on innovative ideas and solutions to improve care at lower costs. In order to battle the challenges we are currently facing, technology will have to make care more efficient. Prevention and wellness will continue playing a key role in primary care, a role that most baby boomers have and will embrace so they can live longer and healthier lives.

Jill Cairney is marketing coordinator for Sampson Regional Medical Center.

*Physician and nurse shortages are seen nationwide, not only due to the rise in the number of baby boomers seeking more medical care, but also because many of those who work within the healthcare industry are reaching retirement age.*

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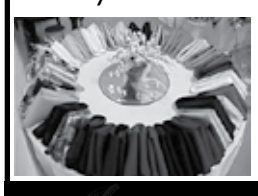

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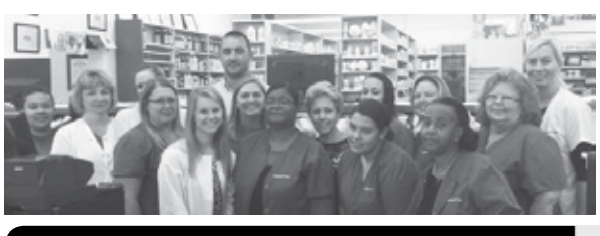
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# Police Dept. built on solid foundation

**By Jay Tilley**
Police Chief

As the Chief of Police, I have often been called on to talk about new innovations that the Clinton Police Department is employing. The fact is those things are only small puzzle pieces to a foundation that the Department is trying to form. Police officers best serve their community when they are working from a solid platform.

Tilley

What is the definition of a good police foundation? It starts with the staff, both sworn and civilian. The Department recruits men and women who are ethical, disciplined, and highly motivated. An officer recruitment team has been formed at the CPD to make sure every effort is made to have a staff inclusive of the community. Citizen confidence is heightened when the Department thrives to mirror the City's population with the officers it hires.

In 2013, the Clinton Police committed to use nationally recognized best police practices for the way the staff carry out police operations. We looked at outside oversight by electing to be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, CALEA. This process required our Department to develop policy and procedures with standards used by law enforcement agencies nationally. Also our Department was required to collect proofs showing that we are conducting ourselves the way we say we are and go through an inspection by assessors from other law enforcement agencies. We are proud that in 2016 the Department will go through its first re-accreditation with assessors scheduled for July.

The second piece of a good police foundation is transparency. It is difficult to disclose information that may reflect negatively on the Department, airing dirty laundry so to speak. Police confidence can only be strengthened when there are honest communications about issues that affect citizens.

Clinton Police publish annually a report on citizen complaints, use of force, biased based profiling, and other police functions. This report provides raw data of the police function and an analysis of that data. It gives the citizen an understanding of what we are doing, strengths/areas of improvement, and how the department is correcting or building on its actions.

Police transparency was subject to public debate this year due to several highlighted and controversial use of force cases throughout the country. There was a national calling for the police to wear body cameras to restore confidence. Even though our Department was already using in-car video cameras and cameras attached to their Tasers, the Command Staff decided our community was best served by starting a body camera program. When the program was introduced to buy a few of the cameras, the support was overwhelming and the City Council and City Manager authorized the purchasing of body cameras for all the uniform officers. This camera program is a statement of our confidence in the police services we deliver.

There is a general fear about crime no matter what city or town you live in. We live in a safe and secure community. 2014 was the lowest crime rate in the past 10 years and 2015 has similar numbers. It best serves us when citizens know the true crime picture for their neighborhood because we want citizens to be aware not fearful. The Department publishes crime stats for each year and there is a crime map to show incidents. We offer crime prevention surveys and home security checks. CPD's anonymous texting service is one of many ways that citizens can report crime and quality of life issues in their neighborhood.

Transparency is only as good as the feedback the police receive from the citizens. For the past several years, the City Council has sponsored community meetings for each council district. The police have learned many lessons, changed procedures, and solved numerous problems from these meetings. The Department in 2013 started an annual Latino Community Meeting to include people who may not have a voice in the community because of a language barrier. Officers participate in approximately 60 community type functions a year. This type of open dialogue allows us to be responsive to our citizen base.

> We believe that training creates confidence in an ever changing environment that police have to operate.

The final part of a good police foundation is training. We believe that training creates confidence in an ever changing environment that police have to operate. The Department embraces the challenge of its core principals of being progressive, well trained, disciplined, and highly motivated. North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards, the agency that oversees certification of police officers requires twenty four hours of yearly in-service training to be a police officer. Clinton Police officers receive approximately sixty hours of in-service training and another one hundred and twenty hours of outside law enforcement education.

You hear a lot of programs are designated as community policing but CPD believes that is what we do all the time. We approach our role as being guardians of our neighbors. The people who require our service are the same people we see at the grocery store, at the local restaurants, and the high school football games on Friday night. We thrive to serve the community with integrity, professionalism, and respect but could not do this without a good police foundation and the support of all the people who help build it.

Jay Tilley is chief of the Clinton Police Department and a former SBI agent.

*We approach our role as being guardians of our neighbors. The people who require our service are the same people we see at the grocery store, at the local restaurants, and the high school football games on Friday night.*

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# Clinton Rec sees successful 2015

**By Jonathan Allen**
Clinton Parks and Rec

The Clinton Recreation & Parks Department has had a successful 2015 year. Our department started off the winter of 2015 with youth basketball and had a total of 180 kids participate. We followed that up with our spring sports of youth soccer (280) and youth baseball/softball (340). The year was concluded with our fall sports of youth soccer (240), football (185), and girls volleyball (90).

Allen

As you can see, we have had a busy but successful year. Our numbers are growing the most in baseball. We have approximately 150 volunteers that make these programs possible. We would like to thank each of them for assisting us in making these programs possible. We have a budget for athletic supplies and team uniforms that total $35,000. We play most sports in house, but we do play a few sports with the county league (flag football and girls softball) due to numbers in those leagues.

The 2016 year will be busy for our department. We have started it off by offering an instructional league for our 5-6 boys and 5-9 girls age groups in basketball. This was made possible through a partnership with the Clinton High School Varsity Boys and Girls basketball teams.

We would like to thank coaches Randy Jordan and Chris Owens along with their assistants. They really made the program successful and look forward to offering this for many years to come. Also, last year we offered a father/daughter dance at the Bellamy Center. We had about 16 couples (32 people) attend. Due to requests from the public and the success of last year, we are offering a mother/son dance on February 20, 2016 and father/daughter dance on February 27, 2016 both from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at the Bellamy Center. To sign up, call 910-299-4906 or come by the Recreation office at 119 Leisure Lane. Finally, this coming year will see the start of the transformation of Royal Lane Park. We received a PARTF (Parks and Recreation Trust Fund) Grant in October 2015 for the amount of $250,000 for this project. The project will total $500,000.

> We will begin the Royal Lane Park Phase 1-A project in the late fall of 2016.

We will begin the Royal Lane Park Phase 1-A project in the late fall of 2016. This project will bring an additional ¼ mile paved walkway/greenway areas, relocate the existing playground and add a tot-lot playground, renovation of the existing walking track at the multipurpose field, renovation of the irrigation and multipurpose field to make the field 120 yards x 40 yards, and a new parking lot added between the pool and multipurpose field. So, come on out to the Clinton Recreation & Parks department to see why Clinton is "The Perfect Place to Play".

# Autryville: A family-friendly town

**What's Changed?**

With the recent elections the Town of Autryville has gained a new mayor, former Commissioner Rev. Larry Autry. The town also gained a new commissioner, Dana Hairr. Commissioners Jakie Faicloth and Carolyn Cashwell were also re-elected. Autryville's Board of Commissioners appointed Ricky Spell to fill a seat vacancy.

The town's Planning and Development Committee Chair, Jakie Faircloth, has helped create a surge in family friendly activities for the town. Some of these activities have included: a carved-pumpkin contest, first annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony, and a children's coloring contest. The Beautification Committee planted crepe myrtles and hollies along Williams Street (Hwy 24). They are also working on restoring plants at the Vinson Memorial Outdoor theater located at the Town Hall. The committee along with the help from Long Branch Baptist Church has added side walk plantings on Williams Street (Hwy 24).

> The town is excited to begin revitalizing the outdoor theater located at the Town Hall.

**What's Happening?**

The Planning and Development Committee with the help of the Historical Society and Beautification Committee have several upcoming events that include an Easter parade on Saturday, Mar. 26 at 11 a.m. and a Classic Antique Car Cruz In from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Also scheduled on this day is an Easter egg hunt at the Town Hall at 2:00pm. (Ages 0-12) The Town Hall, with the help of the Micajah Autry Historical Society, is establishing a history center to be located at the Town Hall. The Pageant Committee is also planning the Little Miss/Miss Autryville Pageant. Please stay tuned for further details.

The town will celebrate its 125th year along with Autryville Baptist Church. Dates and activities are still in the planning stages.

The Planning and Development Committee has recently started publishing a monthly newsletter that can be found at local businesses and at the Town Hall.

**What are we looking forward to?**

The town is excited to begin revitalizing the outdoor theater located at the Town Hall. The theater will be used for various community activities.

Autryville wants to continue to be a family-friendly town and it is our hope to have an increased interest in volunteerism to assist in maintaining on-going projects, as well has new projects. We are proud of our town and want it to be the best it can be.

## Granite

From page 13A

NC Granite and Marble had to make was in the fabrication process. This used to be done on site, at their location in Clinton, but now it is done in a quarry.

"That just is something that we had to do because it is more efficient and beneficial to us," said Edgerton of the change in the way the monuments were fabricated.

Edgerton also went on to mention that they have many funeral homes across the state, as far as Sanford and Richlands, that send them business and refer them to families that have lost loved ones.

Other than running this successful company for decades, Edgerton has also stayed involved in the community. He has served as County Commissioner and on the Clinton City Council.

"I think that it is very important to give back to the community," he attested. "If someone wants to complain about something, they should do something to fix it. I didn't necessarily have anything to complain about, but I felt like I had a calling to help out with public matters concerning the community and county."

After having the business and his family in Sampson County, ever since he was a little boy in the 4th grade, Edgerton has grown to love Sampson County and Clinton.

"What has been so great about having the company and business here in Clinton, and serving on the city council and as County Commissioner, is the fact that I have met so many wonderful people," he said. "The people of Sampson County are truly great folks, and we are a lot like each other when it comes down to it. We are all pretty much hard working, honest people, that want what's best for each other and our families. The people of this county and of the community of Clinton are what make it such a special place to live and to operate a business like the one we have."

For over 4 generations now, the Edgerton family has grown this company. "It's a lot like a farming family," laughed the current leader of the family business. "It's not quite passed down through osmosis, but it's pretty close. We just keep passing down our knowledge of the industry each generation, and the great part about it is, everyone seems to love it. We all enjoy what we do here, and love working with each other."

Reach Adam Capps at 910-214-9585


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# Roseboro: Taking root and blooming

**By Alice Butler**
Roseboro Mayor

Under the leadership of Mayor David Alexander and the town commissioners, the hard work of our town employees, and involvement of our citizens, Roseboro has made great progress in improving the infrastructure, safety and appearance of our town.

Much work has been done, behind the scenes, over the past several years improving our water and sewer systems. This has included refurbishing expensive system components like pumps, motors, fire hydrants and cut-off valves. Employees have also been cleaning and painting in order to preserve our buildings and equipment. This maintenance is crucial even though it is generally out of public view.

**Alice Butler**
Contributing Columnist

The fire department has also been very busy. They not only helped with replacing fire hydrants around town; they have also worked in many other areas to improve the ISO ratings for the town residents and those living in the Coharie Fire District. This new rating in turn is saving property owners money on their insurance premiums. The fire department has also applied for and received several grants so they were able to purchase new turn-out gear and ladders for our dedicated volunteer firefighters.

At our Jan. 2016 board meeting we received wonderful news from our auditor. Our financial status has greatly improved and we received an "unqualified opinion" on our financial statements, or a "clean" audit. We were able to get our audit into the LGC on time for 2015, for the first time in several years. Again this is a tribute to our dedicated and knowledgeable employees. On June 30, 2015, Roseboro had an unassigned fund balance in the General Fund of $921,883, which was equivalent to 88.95 percent of General Fund expenditures and is much improved from recent years when the Town's financial position was criticized by the NC State Treasurer's Office (LGC). The Water and Sewer Fund had unrestricted Net Assets of $301,285, or about 51.6 percent of Operating Expenses. These unrestricted assets are the Town's first line of defense in case of emergency (storms and natural disaster) and allow us some flexibility in repairing or replacing critical infrastructure. Roseboro has buildings, equipment and other physical assets costing over $8 million to operate and maintain. Having adequate reserves is essential in every business organization. The water and sewer system had an operating profit of $31,997 for fiscal year 2015, but this profit was not sufficient to cover depreciation on system assets. That is why reluctantly, the Commissioners agreed to raise utility rates by $1.50 per month back in October. Maintenance of the utility system is very important and system components are very expensive. The board also refinanced several loans in 2015 which will save us over $300,000 during the next ten years.

> As the town has worked to improve the parks, sidewalks, fire hydrants, streets, and other amenities, citizens have taken more pride in their businesses, homes, and yards.

This past year we completed the NCSTEP grant which afforded us the opportunity to help businesses and improve not only downtown area but the entire town. With the work of many citizens, this grant helped to energize our town. There have been many visible improvements like new branding and marketing, new welcome and way-finding signs, a new logo painted on the water tower, new banners and a phone calling tree for our citizens. We also have offered our businesses over $10,000 in matching grants to help them with their renovation/equipment needs and have had studies conducted to let us know how we need to move forward. In addition, we had three movie nights for our citizens to enjoy.

Another positive thing that happened for Roseboro this year was the announcement by the Department of Transportation that the intersections of the NC 24 bypass and NC 242 will have an overpass and an interchange. This is exciting news for both the Roseboro and Salemburg communities. With NC 242 crossing over the NC 24 bypass, travel on these highways will be much safer for everyone – students, parents, teachers, farmers, bus drivers, truck drivers, etc. It took many citizens, business owners and public officials working together to make this change happen. We are looking forward to the completion of this project in the next couple of years.

Also in 2015, Roseboro began building a municipal helipad; it is almost complete. The helipad is located beside the Town Hall and is big enough to accommodate two helicopters simultaneously. It will be a huge asset for emergency personnel and patients because they will have much quicker access to trauma hospitals.

My goal for 2016 is to continue the positive progress and build upon it in order to make Roseboro even better place for our families and businesses. There is a great opportunity for growth with NC 24 becoming four lanes and with the overpass and interchange at NC 24 and NC 242. We are ideally located about 25 minutes from Fayetteville, 40 minutes from Ft Bragg, and 60 minutes from Raleigh and Wilmington. As one army veteran citizen recently said, "We are an Army family and are happy to call Roseboro our retirement home." I hope more people will call Roseboro home. Also, at conferences that I have attended, I have and will continue to talk with potential employers about locating in our community.

Another goal is for Roseboro to become a "sidewalk" community so everyone can walk to the stores, the post office, parks, and schools. As the town has worked to improve the parks, sidewalks, fire hydrants, streets, and other amenities, citizens have taken more pride in their businesses, homes, and yards. Because of our location, we have a lot of traffic through Roseboro and it is important that we make a good impression so that people will want to stop to play, shop, and live here.

We have many smart, caring, good, hardworking people in Roseboro. We have people who have lived here their entire life and love our town and we have people who have chosen to live here because of its small town charm, sense of security, yet with all the big city amenities within our borders or a short drive away. Roseboro has all you need, and is close to all you may want. Even though we are a small town of about 1200 citizens, we serve a much larger population. That is why we have a variety of restaurants, two grocery stores, several doctor offices and much more.

I plan to continue to give of my time and energy to find opportunities for all of our citizens and improve everyone's quality of life. When I visit our neighboring towns and they complement Roseboro on the things we are doing and how nice our town looks, I take pride in all the work that our town leaders, employees, and citizens have done to make Roseboro "take root and bloom".

For more information about Roseboro, please check out our website: www.roseboronc.com or call the Town Hall at 910-525-4121.

# Salemburg eyes continued growth

**By Joe Warren**
Salembnrg mayor

1. Historical background of your town.

The Town of Salemburg was incorporated in 1905. The town derived its name from the old Salem Baptist Church.

Once the town got a post offce, the confusion of two towns in North Carolina with the name of Salem became a problem with mail deliveries. Our town changed its name to Salemburg and the other was known as Winston-Salem.

**Warren**

The need and motivation for the founding of the Town of Salemburg was because of the concentrated area of the church and the public school system.

The Salemburg Baptist Church was founded in 1842. The church later became the founder of a public school in Salemburg. This, in turn, lead to the founding of the first public high school in Sampson County.

2. The choices, challenges, and changes that have occurred over the years in your town?

In the past, present and future, we needed to decide what we wanted our town to be. If we want our town to be clean and safe, then were going to have to work hard to make it clean and safe. If we want our town to grow, we are going to have to create incentives to attract new business. The challenge for any municipality is to be a strong competitor and for its leaders to maintain their integrity.

3. What are some of the changes that have taken place over the past year?

First and foremost there has been a major leadership change in the Town of Salemburg. Bobby Strickland, long time mayor of thirty-four years chose not to run for re-election at the end of his term. At that time, Joe Warren ran unopposed and was elected as the town's new mayor on Nov. 3, 2015. Joe began serving as a Town Commissioner after his election on Nov. 4, 1997 and served as Mayor Pro Tem for last ten years. Mayor Warren has hit the ground running! He is busy networking and brainstorming ways to add to the legacy entrusted in his hands.

Mayor Warren has partnered with officials of Roseboro and Autryville, as well as business leaders of all three municipalities, to establish 'Ihe Western Sampson Commerce Group. They are cleverly advertising it as the "New Triangle." This is in an effort to promote all three municipalities and attract travelers "off" the new super Highway 24 to visit, play and perhaps consider staying in the "New Triangle."

Over the past year the town has seen some growth and activity in new business. Two new businesses have opened their doors in Salemburg. They seem to be doing very well and are offering much needed services to the town and community. Several of the established businesses have experienced growth and more retail sales.

La Triguenita, owned by Gabriela Cortes, is a family-operated convenience store that has a thriving business in the downtown business district. It offers a variety of Mexican and American type grocery items, as well service related conveniences.

Advanced Feed and Supply is operated by Eric Faircloth. He has opened a business in the Highway Business District. It offers home and feed supplies.

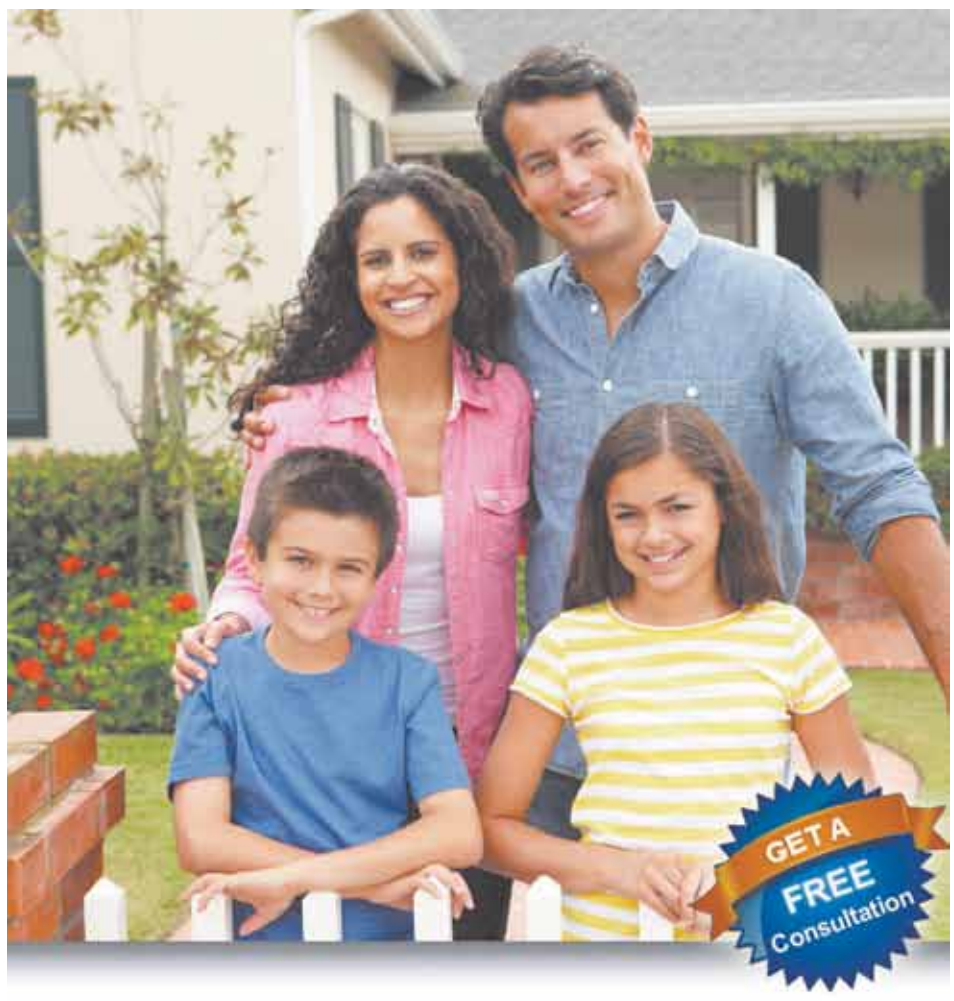
4. What are some of the changes taking place over the new year?

Salemburg is looking, with great optimism, to experience continued growth in both businesses and residents. Efforts are be made and plans are being strategized to see fruition of this anticipation.

A Facebook page is under construction by one ofthe town commissioners. Items will be listed such as properties for sale or possibly for rent, if the owner wishes to it to be listed.

The existing website will be updated and maintained also.

Currently, Salemburg is advertising for a Public Works Director. Unfortunately, the current director, Edwin Tanner passed away unexpectedly on Jan. 25, 2016.

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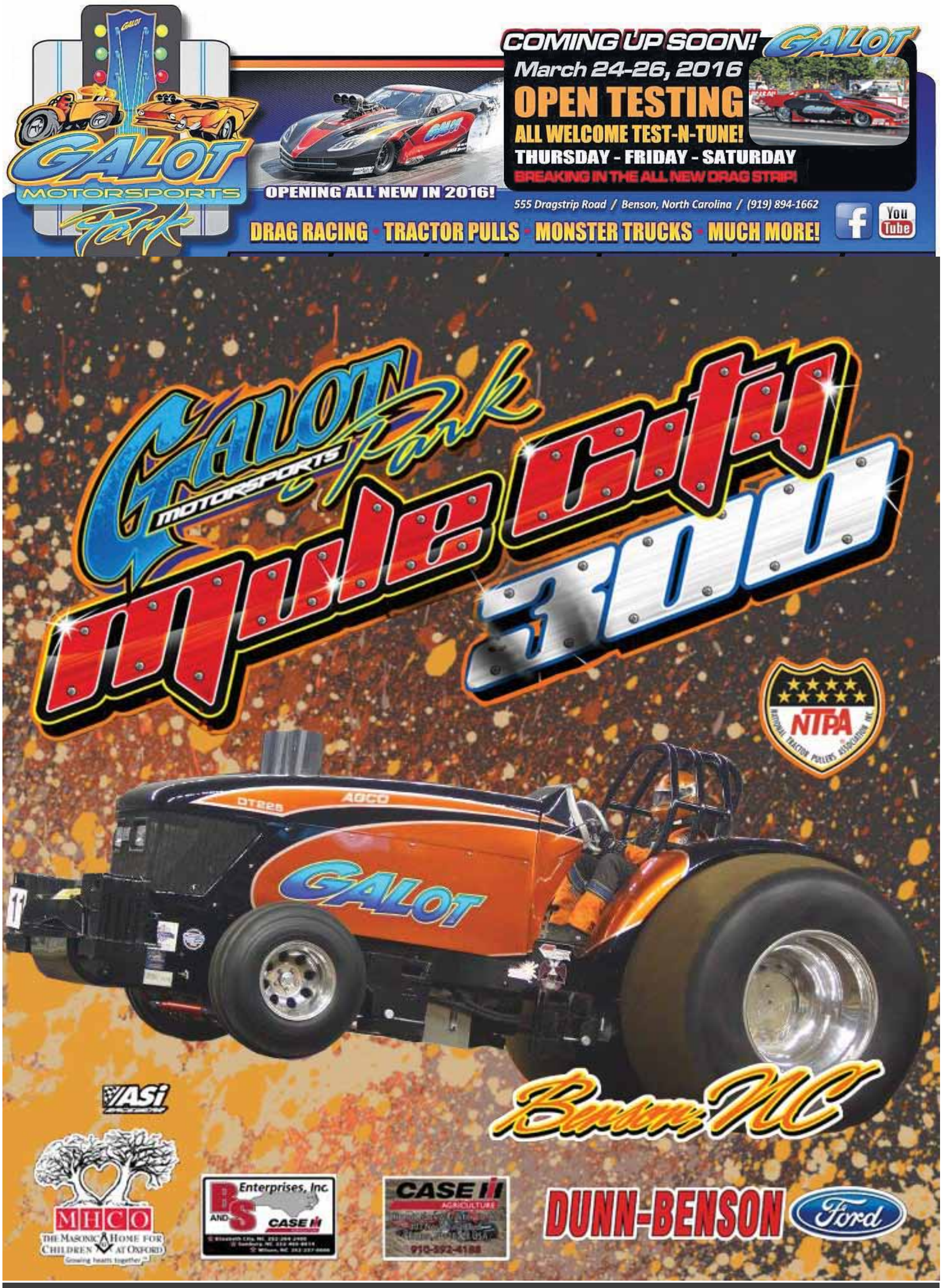


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# Through the generations

**By Kristy D. Carter**
kcarter@civitasmedia.com

If it were possible to solve all the problems with North Carolina's educational system – maybe even those throughout the entire country — one local family says they feel it could be done around Ola Daughtry's kitchen table after church on any given Sunday afternoon.

According to Marcelle Powell, every Sunday, the entire family gathers, and with eight teachers in the family, it does not take long for the topic of education to arise.

Ola Daughtry is a second generation teacher who is the proud mother of two daughters who teach, a daughter in-law who teaches, a son-in-law who taught for several years, and a granddaughter who is a junior at Western Carolina University pursuing a degree in education, carrying on the family tradition.

The teaching tradition didn't start with Ola Daughtry, though. It began many years ago with Daughtry's mother, Josephine Hairr Darden. Darden passed away in December of 1997, but before her passing, she spent many years in the teaching profession. She graduated from Salemburg High School and East Carolina Teachers College. After teaching for eight years, she left the teaching profession to raise her family.

**From a young child, Daughtry said she knew she wanted to go into the teaching profession. After all, it was the family business.**
**— Ola Darden Daughtry**

"Granny always said that once a woman married she would no longer teach," granddaughter Marcelle Powell said. "We are not certain if that was law or if that was just one of the customs of the times."

Darden's daughter, Shirley Darden Hargrove, retired as an elementary school teacher after 30 years in the New Hanover County Schools. Hargrove graduated from from Halls High School and received a bachelor and master's degree from East Carolina University.

"I just love children," Hargrove said. "From the time I was growing up I always knew that I wanted to work with children. It was so rewarding when working with young people. When you worked with them and you realized that they got what you were teaching, it made you feel so good. The reward was always worth all the work."

Ola Darden Daughtry, daughter of Josephine Darden, retired from teaching after 32 years.

According to Hargrove, it is important for people to help children understand and grow, to make them want to learn, to give them a purpose, a desire for success.

"When they realized they could do something, it turned their interest on to do more," the former teachers added. "It was always fun to see the sparks come to life when children understood anything that was difficult for them."

Daughtry, Darden's second daughter, retired as an elementary school teacher in 1994 from Sampson County Schools after teaching for 32 years.

"I began my teaching career in the Raleigh City Schools while my husband, Preston Daughtry, was a student at NCSU," Daughtry said. "When he graduated, his first employment was in Fayetteville; therefore, I transferred to Fayetteville City Schools to continue my career. After a couple of years, he had the opportunity to move to the Goldsboro office, so we relocated again. I taught in the Wayne County Schools for 13

See GENERATIONS | 7B


# A REPORT TO OUR CITIZENS

## AN INSIGHT INTO THE CLINTON CITY BUDGET
## FISCAL YEAR 2015-2016

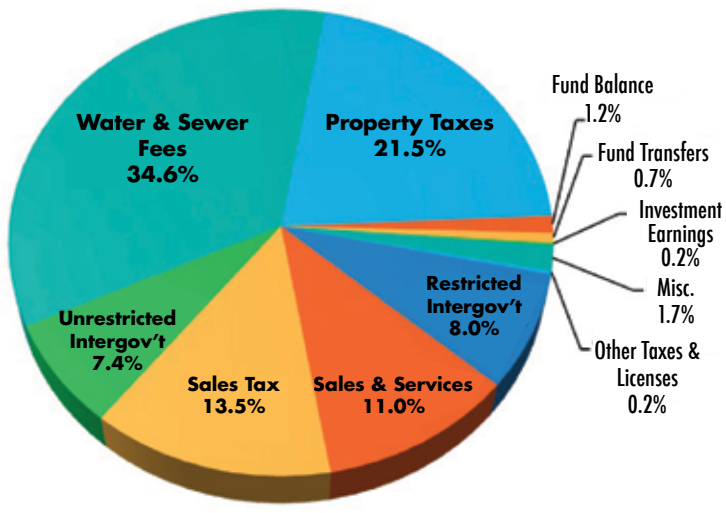
### HOW THE MONEY IS SPENT
### Budgeted Expenditures 2015-2016

How the City Funds Services from Every Dollar

$13.55 million

### WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM
### Budgeted Revenues 2015-2016

City Revenues by Source FY 15-16




$13.55 million

These charts illustrate where our current fiscal year revenues come from and how we have allocated those funds to provide the services mandated by the state or federal governments and those, which you our citizens have asked us to provide.

It is important for our citizens to know how their money is used, and we encourage you to call, write, email, or visit us with any questions you have. If you wish to see the full budget, please view it online at www.cityofclintonnc.us/budget-docs.html.

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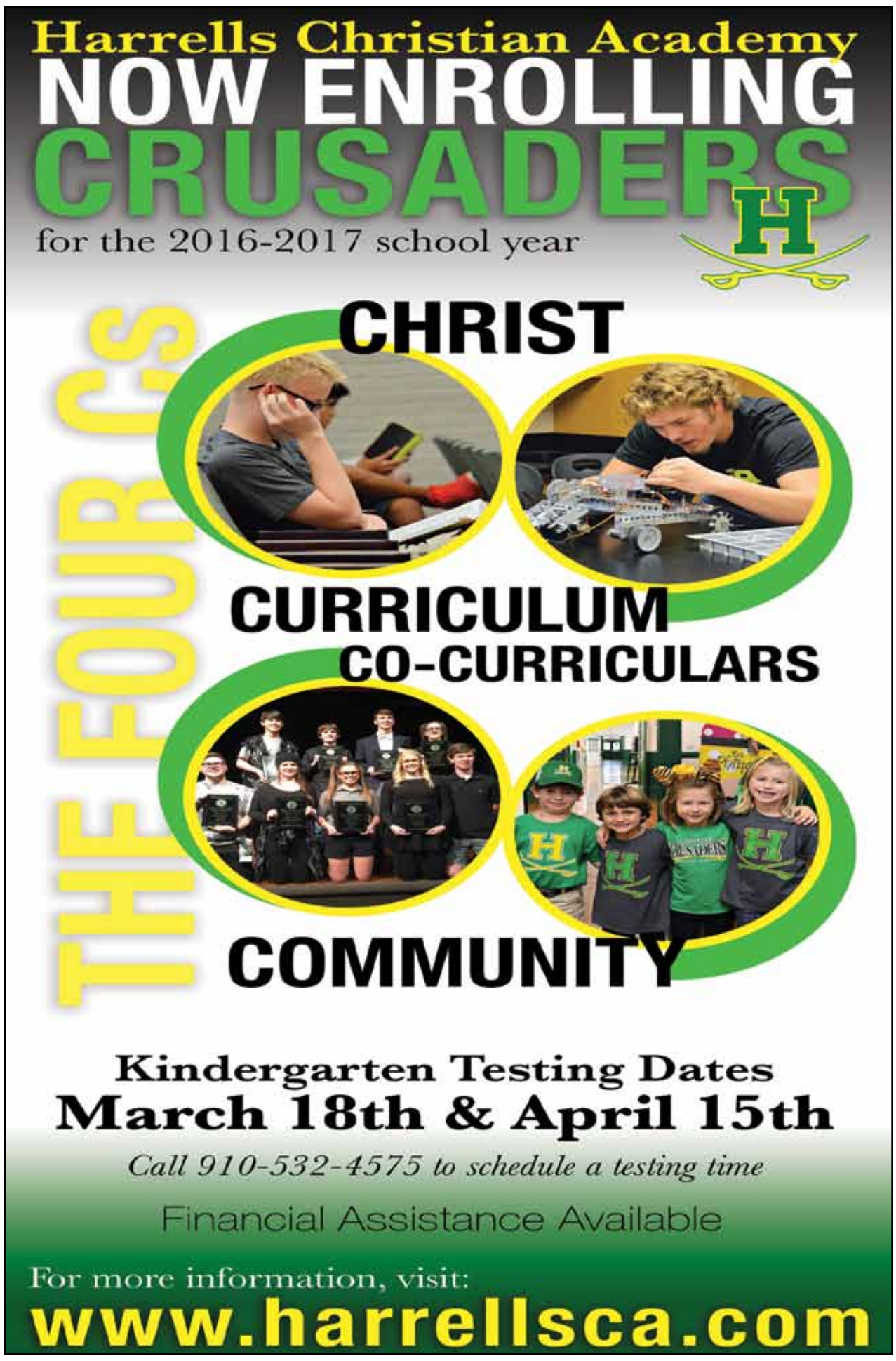
**10B** Hospital a significant part of county's economic engine

**10B** Partnership for Children impacting young lives



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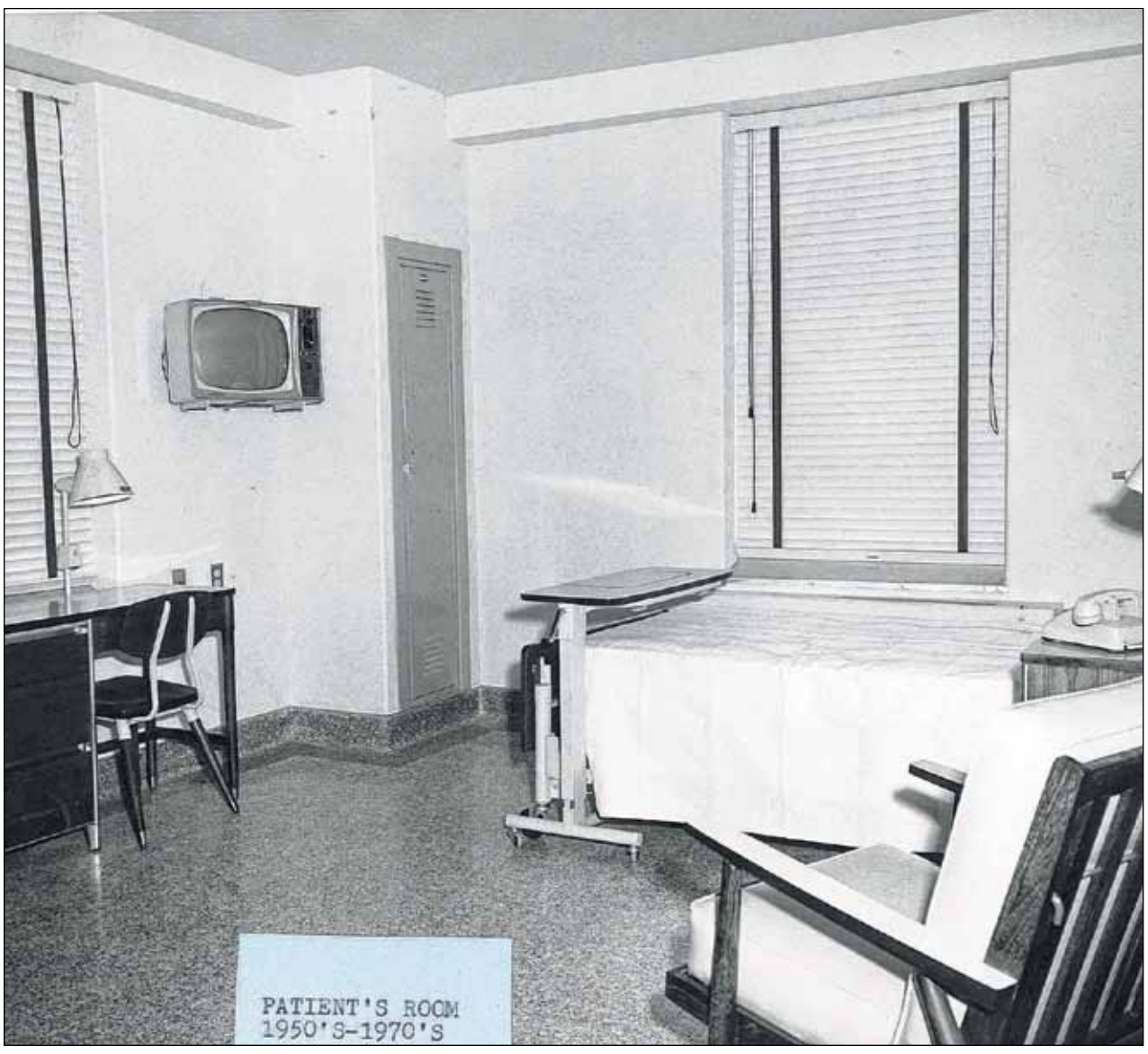


Patients' rooms have been through a lot of changes since the 1950s.

# Nursing through the years

**By Kristy Bland**

Nursing and overall hospital operations have changed dramatically since Sampson Regional Medical Center opened its doors 66 years ago as Sampson County Memorial Hospital. Originally built with 100 beds, the hospital was considered one of the most modern of its size in the country. From 41 personnel and a 20-member medical staff in the 1950s, the hospital now has more than 500 individuals on staff, including employed personnel, contractors, and medical staff.

Harriett Bryant, Registered Nurse began her career at Sampson Regional in July 1978, after completing her degree at James Sprunt Community College. "I always knew I wanted to be a nurse," beamed Bryant. She sat down with us to reflect over the generations of changes she's experienced in nursing. Nursing is a constantly changing discipline. Over the past three decades, nurses have seen developments in treatments, medications, bedside care, and even patients' rights—all contributing to the way we deliver care to patients today.

### Technology

Improvements in technology allow for coordination of care unlike the way it was delivered in 1950. Paper records are becoming a thing of the past in all of healthcare. What once was documented in a paper chart can now be entered in the patient's Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and be easily shared between physicians, specialists, therapists, and nurses as they deliver care to their patients. Test results from blood work, EKGs, x-rays, CT and other procedures are now electronically updated with the findings from radiologists, lab technicians, and other providers, which allows for more quick review, diagnoses, and treatment plans that get patients on the road to recovery faster.

Thinking back to the early days in her career, Bryant remembers following behind the doctor as she carried multiple patient charts from room to room, often taking notes as the doctor visited each patient. "I remember the day when we decided that a rolling cart could be used instead of carrying the charts in our arms," she laughed, thinking now about how times have changed. Nurses now roll carts from room to room, but instead of stacks of charts, they are rolling in computers that hold the record of every patient they care for. "Now, everything is documented directly in the computer, and that allows for a quicker documentation process and treatment of the patient," Bryant shared. Computers aren't the only technology devices at the bedside now. Bryant vividly recalls days when nurses counted IV drips to ensure every dosage was set correctly. Today, computerized systems integrate with the IV pumps, allowing nurses to program the pumps to be sure the correct dosage is dispensed.

### Patient-centered care

The Institute of Medicine defines patient centered care as "Providing care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values, and ensuring that patient values guide all clinical decisions." What does this mean for the patient? Patients should feel free to ask questions about their care in any healthcare setting, be comfortable, and receive the care that they have helped to shape based off of the findings from their healthcare team.

This was not the case in the 1950s, reflecting back to the days when dads weren't allowed into the delivery room or visitation hours were more set and rigid. These restrictions are now a thing of the past so that families can be more involved in their patient's care. As an example, Bryant thought back to changes in the way advance directives are established. "It is important for patients and families to understand their care and what they can request," stated Bryant. She explained that previously doctors made decisions about when to cease medical treatment. Today, patients now have the peace of mind to know that they can state their wishes regarding medical treatment and ensure those wishes will be filled if they are ever unable to communicate them to the doctor.

Nurses used rolling carts to carry patients' charts from room to room as they followed the doctor.

### Faster care, quicker recovery

Improvements in technology and equipment over the decades has also led to shorter stays and faster recovery for patients. Years ago, what may have seemed like a simple procedure could have meant a hospital stay measuring days or weeks. Today's surgical patients can have a procedure and be discharged the same day, thanks to laparoscopic techniques and other technology-guided care. Bryant recalls back to the beginning of her nursing career, a time when she remembers patients staying for months in the hospital due to a myocardial infarction, commonly known as a heart attack. "These patients were often referred to as cardiac cripple, because back then it was thought that it was best for the patients not to move. We now know that moving is an important factor in the recovery of patients," said Bryant.

Advancements in technology and medicine mean we can now diagnose diseases sooner and respond with the appropriate treatment to get patients back to their former routine.

### Your healthcare team

Today's nurses are recognized as an integral part of the healthcare team and do much more than just carry out a doctor's orders. Physicians and other clinical areas respect nurses for their knowledge of the patient because they are truly the eyes and ears of their unit. Now, patient care is collaborative with the nurses, physicians, physical therapists, dieticians and other clinical areas sharing their findings. This interdisciplinary approach allows for more comprehensive care of the patient.

When asked if she would go do it all over again, Bryant responded with an emphatic yes. "I love nursing and the opportunities it has given me to help others," explained Bryant. Her recommendation to those seeking a career in nursing is to do it for the right reasons. "If you love people and caring for others then nursing can be a very rewarding career."

### Do you remember? In 1950....

Syringes used to be made of glass – and had reusable needles!

IV bags didn't exist – they were also made of glass.

Nurses didn't take blood pressures or hang IVs – that was a doctor's job.

Bedpans were made of metal and were reusable.

Nurses wore white dresses and a nurse's cap.

Kristy Bland is marketing coordinator for Sampson Regional Medical Center.

Nurses once wore white dresses and caps as they worked in the hospital.

Sampson Regional Medical Center RN, Harriet Bryant, began her career at the hospital in July 1978.

Wanda Holden, a SRMC RN, began working at the hospital in August 1977.

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# Bond's passage will benefit SCC

**Dr. Paul Hutchins**
Contributing columnist

The spring 2016 semester is underway at Sampson Community College (SCC) and continuing and new students across our campus are moving toward reaching their educational goals. I begin this year's Insight article with a request for your support of the 2016 Connect NC Bond referendum that you will have the opportunity to vote on during the March 15th North Carolina Primary election.

The Governor, General Assembly and the UNC Board of Governors have approved the bond referendum to go to the voters of North Carolina on March 15th to support needed capital improvements benefiting the state and its agencies and institutions. The 2016 Connect NC bond includes a $2 billion package whose financed improvements will connect North Carolina to the 21st century securing new jobs by attracting economic and business development through the statewide investment in engineering, plant sciences, agriculture, education, parks, safety, recreation and water and sewer infrastructure. It has been 15 years since the last general obligation bond was authorized to update the state's infrastructure and since the state has added more than 2 million people to the state's population. No tax increases are necessary to finance the improvements or to service the bonds.

North Carolina's community colleges are an essential component for our state's continued economic growth and opportunity. Our 58 campus community colleges provide affordable, practical education to people all across the state. They work to prepare young people for the workforce and help retrain older workers to compete in today's economy. As a result, community colleges are one of North Carolina's most important economic resources and help expand the workforce, tax base, and improve our ability to compete with other states. That's why the 2016 Connect NC Bond Initiative is so important. This bond will help improve the facilities at every one of North Carolina's community colleges, not a single college is left out of the benefits of this initiative. The bond will help begin the process of upgrading and adding to our community college system. The facilities at the state's community colleges are in many cases long overdue for improvement, which is why it is so critical that we fund these projects now. The passage of 2016 Connect NC will mean nearly $5 million for Sampson Community College for needed renovations and repairs to our facilities. I encourage you to learn more about the 2016 Connect NC Bond Initiative and to consider its positive impact on Sampson Community College when you vote on the bond referendum on March 15th.

The College is blessed with outstanding faculty and student support staff who work tirelessly to assist our students. The faculty, and staff at SCC personify the Mission of the College which is: "to provide accessible and affordable education, workforce training, and lifelong enrichment. This mission is accomplished through effective teaching, student support, public outreach, and partnering with others to improve the quality of life for the people of Sampson County".

The spring 2016 semester has seen an increase in the number of Career and College Promise (CCP) students attending SCC. Over 200 CCP are students enrolled this spring. Through CCP, qualified high-school-age students in North Carolina have the opportunity to pursue these options, tuition free, while they are in high school, allowing them to get a jumpstart on their workplace and college preparation. . The growth is attributed to the College's expanded efforts to recruit more Career and College Promise (CCP) high school students. The efforts of Career Specialist Perry Gillespie have been evident with a 90 percent increase in CCP enrollment from fall 2015 to spring 2016. With fall being the first semester Mr. Gillespie was in the high schools, we are optimistic that more students and families will become aware of the tremendous benefit CCP courses offer students seeking a jump start on college course work. The College is currently developing a new Gateway program that would serve to help high school students start in a CCP pathway as juniors and then complete one year at SCC. After that year, SCC staff would work with these students to help them transition to the four-year college or university of their choice. The program would include job shadowing, travel, and other activities designed to help students gain experience that leads to successful transfer and completion.

At SCC our CCP students have two pathways to choose from, College Transfer and Technical Careers. The College transfer pathways provide tuition-free course credits toward the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science that will transfer seamlessly to any public or participating private college or university. The Technical Careers pathway provides an opportunity to earn tuition-free course credits at an NC Community College toward a job credential, certificate or diploma in a technical career.

The new Human Service Technology program which began in the fall of 2015 has quickly become a popular choice among high school Career and College Promise students with over 90 students enrolled in that pathway option. Traditional college student enrollment also increased and students are engaged in Substance Abuse, Interpersonal Relations, and Interviewing Technique courses this semester. Participation in extracurricular activities outside of class are available for Human Service Technology students, as well as all students in the Education Division, through Peer Opportunities for Development (PODs). The PODs provide students with activities such as job exploration, service learning, and social engagement opportunities.

A little over a year ago, Sampson Community College began preparations to open a center for students geared to support and guide them along the way in achieving their educational goals that would either lead them into workforce or to a four-year university. The Academic Success Center (ASC) opened in January, 2015 and provides many opportunities for students to enrich their college experience and helps them realize that a college education is more than just a possibility.

During the fall of 2014, part of the library got a facelift so that the center would have one large room that would be used as an open computer lab and an even larger room with tables where students could study together or be tutored by professional or peer tutors. The center has professional tutors for English, math, biology, chemistry, and communications. Many peer tutors are available to students who prefer one-on-one tutoring. Open to all currently enrolled curriculum students, the center also provides additional services to include password resets and other technology assistance. During early registration and on registration days, the open computer lab is very busy with students self-enrolling in their courses through WebAdvisor. Students are required to meet with their academic advisor prior to enrolling in courses. ASC and Student Services staff provide assistance to students who need help registering for classes.

This past fall, the ASC sponsored a series of student workshops to further enhance the services provided. This semester, the number of workshops has doubled. "Workshop Wednesdays" will be offered to students several Wednesdays throughout the semester from 12:30-1:30. Topics will include the writing process, making oral presentations, Moodle basics, graphics calculators, math anxiety, and test taking strategies. All of the workshops will be facilitated by SCC Arts and Sciences faculty. Next fall, we plan to increase the number of workshops and will be seeking student input as to what other topics they feel will help them be more successful. Recently, the Distance Learning staff has moved to the Academic Success Center and plans are also underway to relocate the distance learning classroom to the ASC.

The Continuing Education Program at SCC continues to provide a wide range of programs and services to meet the learning needs of individuals and the update training required by business and industry in Sampson County. Ammonia Refrigeration training returns to SCC this spring after two-year hiatus. In a unique agreement, Sampson Community College and Lanier Technical College in Atlanta are partnering to bring Lanier Tech's world-class Ammonia Refrigeration Training to our SCC campus. The partnership provides more in-demand, ammonia training opportunities for the industrial refrigeration business community. Lanier Tech, with over 15 years of world-class, hands-on training in its live, three systems facility, will take the lead for both institutions in class registration and operator certification. By working together, Lanier Tech and SCC will provide the industrial refrigeration community with multiple training locations, professional consistency, plus the added benefits of flexibility and potentially reduced expense for the community. The spring semester offers Operator I, 8-hour HAZMAT, and 24-hour HAZMAT safety training.

A new industry training program now underway involves Enviva Pellet, located in the northeastern part of Sampson County, and is one of the largest manufacturers of woody biomass fuels with a purpose of developing cleaner alternative energy. Working with company leaders, Continuing Education's Customized Training/ Workforce Development program is rolling out a training series to focus on Safety, Leadership, Continuous Improvement, Computer Technology skill, and Sustainable Biomass Basics. Training will not only improve production capacity and profitability, but also add value to building a stronger workforce in Sampson County.

A second training program in progress involves Rheinfelden Americas, an international leader in labeling and packaging solutions and a well-known European producer of aluminum slugs. The company is located in the facility formerly occupied by Aludisc in Clinton. SCC will be providing the company safety and leadership training, two critical components needed to enhance efficiency and sustainability. Soft skill leadership activities are also planned to further strengthen the organization and help promote an attractive, productive work environment.

In the area of Truck Driver Training, a CDL Prep class is being planned for Hog Slat enabling company employees to acquire a CDL learners permit. Additionally, Prestage Farms is exploring the opportunity to establish a simulator-based safety class on the SCC campus for the company's drivers, particularly those drivers who haul live animals.

For persons seeking to enter the job market but have limited skills, HRD will be offering a new class entitled "MoneySense : Making the Most of Your Dollars and Cents", that will equip students to learn budgeting and saving skills, borrowing basics, and how to establish and maintain good credit. The class is free to persons who are unemployed or employed in part-time jobs.

Finally, in the area of enrichment, photography enthusiasts who have enjoyed Gloria Edwards's intro and advanced classes can look forward this spring to Shutterbugs IV. This class will focus on building students' editing skills, adeptness with camera settings, and photo composition. The class begins Mar. 1 and will meet from 4-6 p.m.

The fall was a busy season for the Sampson Community College Foundation starting with an early September Scholar-Donor Cookout where students have a chance to meet and personally thank donors for helping fund their education. Our patrons enjoyed visiting the campus and seeing how their gifts are impacting lives. We celebrated more than $100,000 being awarded in scholarships to students this year. My wife Tina and I hosted a lunch at our home that was sponsored by the Foundation for new employees where new staff heard from administrative leaders at the college. A Donor Appreciation Reception was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Neal Strickland where scholars addressed and thanked donors and where exceptional colleagues were recognized for excellence in the workplace. The very deserving winners of the 2015 EXCEL awards were Marion Pope and Robin Bradshaw. In October, the Foundation kicked off the Campus Drive Campaign with a "Biker" themed day full of activities for staff and faculty, and we are proud to have continued the long standing tradition of 100 percent of SCC employees supporting the Foundation! The 13th Annual Sampson Classic Golf Tournament was played in November and featured an Auction and Reception that raised over $30,000 for student scholarships. More than 150 individuals and businesses participated in the tournament that is played in memory of dear friend of SCC, Bill Johnson. Later in November we hosted the President's Luncheon on Health Care Issues in rural NC that gave local leaders in the industry a chance to hear about the Campbell school of Medicine and to discuss trends in medicine.

Moving into the 2016, the Foundation will sponsor the next President's Luncheon in April for a discussion on issues in education. Spring Foundation grants were recently announced and will help four nursing instructors with continuing education requirements, admissions staff with recruitment materials, and a biology instructor with a project in genetic testing. We look forward to hosting Osei and the Akapoma Traditional African Dance Music Company on Feb. 15 as we celebrate of Black History month. The public is invited to the performance in the Warren Center at 10, 11 or 12. The Annual Phonathon will be held Mar. 15 from 6-8 and will air live on StarVision. Tune in to hear from students, staff, alumni, Foundation Directors and Trustees as they share some of the exciting stories of Sampson Community College! The Foundation will host the Mount Olive University Jazz Band Apr. 5 in the Activities Center, and the public is invited.

SCC will continue in 2016 to explore new program opportunities that will provide excellent employment potential for our graduates and meet the needs of our community. SCC has applied to the state community college system for permission to begin three new programs in fall of 2016. Those programs are Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Science and Medical Assisting. I want to acknowledge and thank our Board of Trustees members. I am grateful for their dedication and service. Their guidance and support helps to make SCC a great community college. SCC has a tremendous faculty and staff that work tirelessly to help our students achieve their educational goals. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with them. I want to acknowledge and thank the following for their contributions to this article: Ann Butler, Dean of Continuing Education; Susan Baxter, Division Chair of Education and Executive Director, QEP; Amy Noel, Dean of Student Services; Carole Phipps, Division Chair, Arts and Sciences and Lisa Turlington, Executive Director, SCC Foundation.

As our slogan "Begin here, go anywhere" indicates, SCC has Associate of Arts, Associate of Science and Continuing Education programs that you can begin and complete here to be successful anywhere. I am honored to serve as President of Sampson Community College and I look forward to working with our Trustees, faculty and staff in 2016 to serve the learning needs of our community.

# We're always working to improve our services

**Jimmy Thornton**
Contributing columnist

In 2015, the Sheriff's Office secured grant funding to purchase a state-of-the art latent print scan machine that will allow investigators to search the state and federal fingerprint database. The procurement of this machine, which is expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2016, will allow investigators the ability to compare fingerprints lifted at crime scenes immediately.

Currently, the Sheriff's Office is dependent upon the State Crime Lab to process latent evidence. The current processing time is approximately six months, and there are limitations on the amount of evidence that may be submitted per case.

The new system will allow latent prints collected at crime scenes to be searched against the NC latent print database known as SAFIS (Statewide Automated Fingerprint Identification Service) and the federal latent print database IAFIS (Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System). This will provide citizens with the greatest probability of matching latent prints collected at crime scenes to an offender. Unidentified latent prints from crime scenes will automatically be reversed searched against people that are arrested each day.

The new system will allow latent evidence to be completely processed in the shortest time possible. Currently prints are checked in the Sheriff's Office Tracker System, which does comparison to persons arrested in Sampson County only. If no match is made, then the prints need to be searched through SAFIS. Having a SAFIS system will eliminate double work and unneeded travel to the State Crime Lab.

The NC Governor's Crime Commission approved $44,975.25 in grant funding for the project. The remaining balance of $20,191.75 will be paid with Seized Drug Asset Forfeiture Funds, therefore no local tax dollars will be used.

I'm excited that we were able to see the approval of the funding and the project in 2015. In 2016, we will continue to identify new ways to constantly improve our services, while being thrifty. After all, the taxpayers deserve more bang for their buck.

Jimmy Thornton is the Sampson County Sheriff.

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# Strickland family stays involved in community

**By Adam Capps**
acapps@civitasmedia.com

Community involvement and love for their county has always been something that has run deep in the Jefferson and Sue Strickland family. Along with their three sons, Neal, Mark and Stephen, the family has done many tasks throughout their lives and careers to make the community and county a better place. One common theme when talking with each of them is that they thoroughly enjoy helping others and love their home.

Jefferson, Stephen, and Sue Strickland in their home.

Adam Capps/Sampson Independent

### Jefferson Strickland

Jefferson Strickland graduated from Salemburg High School in 1956. He went on to graduate from East Carolina in 1960, where he met his future wife, at the time, Sue Holland. The two married in 1961, and in June will have been married for 55 years.

He began teaching at Roseboro-Salemburg School in 1961, and taught there for six years. He then left teaching and became a community service consultant in Hillsborough for just one year. After being in Hillsborough, he was contacted to become the new Dean of Students at Sampson Technical Institute, known as Sampson Community College today.

"It's not necessarily that I was looking for a way to come back here, but it seemed like every time I would leave, Sampson County would keep calling me home," said Jefferson. "The opportunities for me have always been here in Sampson County. People will tell me how much I have done for this county and the surrounding communities, but this county has done a lot for me, and I am so blessed and fortunate to call it home."

In 1977, Strickland was co-founder of Toyota of Clinton. He, along with Tommy Baker, opened the dealership in Clinton. While he was there, Chris Fann, Strickland's nephew, came and joined them. Fann is now still at what is now known as Go-Toyota.

"It means a lot that Chris is still there and has kept something going that Tommy and I started," said Strickland. "I am very proud of him."

Jefferson was also a sales and shipping associate at Plastic Tubing Inc. in Roseboro. After doing that for a while and leaving, he returned as vice president of the organization in 1990.

Most recently, Strickland was elected county commissioner in Sampson County. He served from 2006 to December of 2014. It was during his tenure on the board that the economy took a hard hit.

"We had plans for doing big projects and grants to make things better here in Sampson County. When the economy went down and got so bad and low, we had to rethink things. Eventually, we kind of decided we were going to start doing more with less," said Strickland. "That became our motto."

Since December of 2014, Strickland has been retired. However, he still finds other ways to stay active in his community, and with service at his church, Roseboro United Methodist Church. The patriarch of this family helped begin what has now became a full family effort in community service.

### Sue Strickland

Sue Holland, of Gastonia, went to East Carolina (College at the time) and met her future husband, Jefferson Strickland there. After begining to date in college, they were eventually married in June of 1961, and she has been known as Mrs. Strickland ever since. She, too, was a teacher, and taught the majority of her teaching career at Roseboro-Salemburg School. She also taught at Charles E. Perry.

"To do something that long, especially to teach that long, it's something you really have to love and something that has to mean a lot to you," said Sue. "There are so many people in the community that I've taught, and I wish I could remember all of them the way that a lot of them remember me."

She went on to mention that the teaching she did all of those year is still rewarding to her these days.

"I'll be in public, at a grocery store or some place like that, and someone will come up to me and tell me that I taught them in third grade, or that my husband taught them or sold them a car," she said. "When something like that happens, it really means a lot to me. It means that what I did or what we did really meant something to somebody, and this community has always been so good to me and my family."

### Stephen Strickland

Like their elder sons, Mark and Neal, youngest son Stephen Strickland went to Lakewood High School, and was a real estate agent for Naylor Realty. He was successful in the industry until an unexpected, life threatening stroke change his life back in 2009.

He spent a lot of time in the hospital, and has since been cared for by his parents, Sue and Jefferson.

"He has really been such a blessing for us," said Jefferson. "Sometimes you wonder why things happen, but he really has, and it hasn't always been easy-going, but he's been such a blessing for us. Being here with us has just blessed us in such a great way, and it is incredible to see the progress that he has made since 2009."

Stephen has two children, Drew and Pate. He continues to be a blessing to those who come into contact with him, and still has a mind and memory sharper than most.

"He keeps us in the loop on who people are and things like that," said Mrs. Strickland. "It's amazing how well his mind works and the memory he has. What he has went through has been nothing close to an easy ride, but we are thankful for the time we get with him."

### Mark Strickland

The middle Strickland son, Mark, is the director at the North Carolina Justice Academies in Salemburg and Edneyville.

"I directly supervise three deputy directors and an administrative assistant. I ensure the management of the training function meets the training needs of customers using accurate assessment tools, training design and development meets current standards, current methodologies for delivery of training are utilized, and mechanisms for continuous evaluation are employed," said Mark Strickland.

"It is also my responsibility to ensure that campus operations meet current goals, objectives and standards."

Strickland has to make sure that all support functions include instructional support, registration, learning resources, and technology meet the needs of the staff and customers.

The North Carolina Justice Academy is a nationally accredited training institution and another big part of Mark's responsibility is to see that the Academy maintains the distinction in overseeing the accreditation functions to ensure compliance.

Strickland is a 1985 graduate of Lakewood High School,, then of NC State in 1989. He later graduated from Methodist with a master's degree in 2007, in Justice Administration.

Mark and his wife, Sharon, live at Lakewood Country Club and have two children — Ross, who is playing baseball at Roanoke College in Virginia, and Sarah Wallace, who is a student at Lakewood High.

Adam Capps/Sampson Independent

**Jefferson and Sue Strickland recall old memories while looking through a family photo album.**

### Neal Strickland

Neal Strickland, the oldest of the sons, graduated from Lakewood High School in 1981. He left there and went to UNCW, where he graduated in 1985. He and his wife, Jonelle, reside in Clinton, where he is a member of the City Council. Strickland also works out of Raleigh, where he is the consultant coordinator for the State Department of Transportation.

He oversees projects such as the construction of N.C. Hwy. 24.

### Neal and Jonelle have two kids, Madison and Stephen.

He and his wife support local theater and participate in recreational activities offered by the Clinton Parks and Recreation. Neal realized community involvement was important in his family from a young age, and knew he wanted to be a part of that as well.

"My dad, Jefferson, was on the town council in Roseboro, back in the 1970s," said Neal. "When I was older, the untimely death of Mr. Albert Kaleel opened up a seat on the Clinton council. I was asked to fill in to complete that term, and then I was re-elected after that."

Strickland's uncle, Bobby Strickland, was long-time mayor of Salemburg as well.

"My Uncle Bobby really had a big impact on me wanting to do things in the community too," he said. "Knowing that it was a way of life for my family, it was something I wanted to get into, and it's something I really enjoy doing."

It's an ongoing thing with the Strickland family. They love their community. But something that Jefferson wanted to get across more than anything, was that the community had been good to him and his family.

"Sampson County has always called me back whenever I may would try to get away," he said. "We are so blessed to live here, and I am so glad to have raised my family here, and that they are all still around here," he continued.

"The people around here a phenomenal, and always have been. It's a wonderful blessing to be able to call Sampson County home."

# Arts Council planning a colorful year

**Kara Donatelli**
Contributing columnist

For more than 42 years, the Sampson Arts Council (SAC) has pursued its mission of "enriching the cultural lives of the citizens of Sampson County by nurturing and supporting excellence in the arts; promoting, presenting and encouraging educational activities; and otherwise enhancing the growth and appreciation of the visual, literary and performing arts." In 2014-2015, approximately 13,000 people attended events and programs supported by the Sampson Arts Council and SAC members totaled 170. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to our members, volunteers and supporters. We are constantly amazed at how generous our community is regarding the arts!

The SAC strives not only to entertain and educate the public, but also to increase opportunities for artists to gain recognition. We host seven gallery exhibitions a year in the Small House Gallery that feature the work of many local and regional artists, from the experienced and respected to the new and promising. Since July, we have featured 13 professional artists and 125 student artists. All 2015 -2016 art exhibits are proudly sponsored by Smithfield. Currently on display in the Small House Gallery through February 11, is the Student Art Show featuring 118 masterpieces created by Sampson County and Clinton City School students. Upcoming exhibits include "With These Hands", a 3-D invitational exhibit featuring artisans from Sampson County working in a wide variety of mediums (Feb. 18 – Mar. 17) and "It's All About That Brick", Lego® Design Challenge and Exhibit (Mar. 31 – Apr. 28). These exhibits are sure to appeal to all ages.

In the past year, we have added an exciting aspect to art education opportunities for Sampson County with the opening of the SAC Pottery Barn Studio, the first and only pottery studio in our county! Pottery classes are currently being offered to children and adults. We also provide monthly art classes at the Victor R. Small House for K-12 students in a variety of media. Make sure to stop by for a tour of the Pottery Barn Studio and visit www.sampsonarts.net for more information on upcoming art classes and workshops.

We are proud to serve as a NC Arts Council Designated County Partner to manage the Grassroots Grant allotment for Sampson County. In 2015-2016, we were honored to award seven Sampson County organizations with Grassroots Grants. The Sampson Community Theatre received a Grassroots Grant for their production of "Little Women the Musical" (Feb. 5-7 and 12-14), as well as the Sampson Community College Foundation to present three performances by Kwabena Osei Appiagyei and his Akapoma Traditional Music and Dance Company at Sampson Community College in honor of Black History Month on Feb. 15, 2016 (10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. at the Warren Student Center – free and open to the public). Mark your calendar. You do not want to miss these upcoming art events.

We look forward to a colorful year full of new ideas and creativity in 2016. Our goal is to increase membership as well as participation and diversity at events. The SAC Board of Directors are currently beginning a strategic planning process which will allow us to better serve our community.

For more information about the Sampson Arts Council and the events and classes we offer, I encourage you to contact us at 910-596-2533, visit us at 709 College St. in Clinton, or www.sampsonarts.net Stop by the Victor R. Small House to learn more about becoming a member of the Sampson Council or sponsor our annual "Golf Fore the Arts" fundraiser which will be held June 9 & 10, 2016. Thank you for your continued support of the Sampson Arts Council and the arts in our community.

Kara Donatelli is executive director of the Sampson Arts Council. She can be reached at 910-596-2533.

# Building success through the generations in Clinton

As a lifelong citizen of Clinton and father of two wonderful little girls, this year's Insight theme of "Success through the Generations" carries a special meaning for me. Success and progress in our community have come from the hard work and dedication of many men and women committed to improving Clinton. The accomplishments of past generations have provided us with the opportunity to be even more successful in the years ahead and to ensure a promising future for our children.

**Lew Starling**
Contributing columnist

With all the changes in Clinton through the years, it is important for us to consider what we want Clinton to be like for our children and their children. I grew up on Powell Street and I know my grandparents and parents worked hard to make sure my sisters and I would have every opportunity possible to succeed. I have seen many changes in our city but the community has always come together to accomplish great things. This has been a key to our success through the generations and one City Council and I intend to continue. The city's mission statement ends by declaring our intent to ensure "opportunities for future generations." To that end, City Council and I believe in focusing resources on projects and programs that will make Clinton not only a great place to live now but also in the future.

We were able to build off the successes of recent generations to revitalize our downtown and our successes in Downtown Clinton will allow the next generation to do even more. In addition to downtown, we are improving the quality of life in Clinton with projects at our parks and installation of sidewalks in the city. We are in the design stages of a $500,000 renovation to the playgrounds, track, and football field at Royal Lane Park. This project will also include new picnic shelters and walking paths in the park. Connectivity and accessibility are important for our community to thrive. New sidewalks along Barden Street help connect the Sampson Center Gym and park with homes, Sunset Avenue School, and downtown. Our partnership with NCDOT will provide new sidewalks and sidewalk improvements to connect Butler Avenue and Sunset Avenue Schools as well as provide sidewalks from Sampson Community College to the U.S. 701 bypass. We are also exploring the possibility of working with NCDOT to build pathways along Elizabeth Street and Westover Road to connect the high school with the Sunset Avenue sidewalks and downtown.

**We are in the design stages of a $500,000 renovation to the playgrounds, track, and football field at Royal Lane Park.**
**— By Lew Starling**

In order to guarantee success for our future generations, we have an obligation now to protect and plan for the use of our natural resources. We are doing this through multiple infrastructure projects that will not only ensure availability of future water supplies but also attract new growth and opportunities. We recently completed a 500,000-gallon water tank on Southwood Drive to ensure water pressure and fire protection for the industrial area along N.C. 24 and U.S. 701. We are beginning the final phases of our water production expansion that will add 1.5 million gallons per day to our system, and we have begun preparing for the next upgrades needed at our wastewater treatment plant. These infrastructure projects will make us attractive to new industry and residents, which will provide new opportunities for Clinton.

A lot has changed since my childhood and Clinton is still a wonderful community. We all have a responsibility to make sure it continues to be a wonderful community for future generations. The City Council and I will continue to work diligently with city staff to ensure Clinton is the perfect place to call home now and for many generations yet to come.

Lew Starling is the Mayor of Clinton.

## Generations

From page 1B

years. In time, we built a home in Sampson County on the family farm. I eventually transferred one final time to Hargrove Elementary School where I continued to teach 4th and 5th grade and completed my 32 year career in education at home in Sampson County."

From a young child, Daughtry said she knew she wanted to go into the teaching profession. After all, it was the family business.

"From young childhood, I had the goal of becoming a teacher," Daughtry said. "I enjoyed reading and playing school with my dolls. I always enjoyed assisting my teachers with little jobs in the classroom that I could do. My sixth grade teacher, Lula Chamblee, was also the school librarian. At that time, schools did not have full time librarians. I would stay after school and help her with the library responsibilities. I was always fascinated with all the books and getting them catalogued correctly."

"I have always loved working with children. Though teaching was not the highest paying job, I thought it was a respected position. The teaching career allowed me to have quality time with my own children when they had holidays and school was closed."

Daugthry's daughter, Marcelle, continues the family tradition as a teacher at Hobbton Middle School, teaching math.

Marcelle Powell continues the family business of teaching at Hobbton Middle School.

Powell began her teaching career in Roanoke Rapids, where she taught for seven years.

"When the opportunity arose for us to return to Sampson County, my small family relocated and I was fortunate to find a math position at Union Middle School," Powell said. "I thoroughly enjoyed that one year and made many friends that I still hold dear to this day, but when presented with the opportunity to go home, to Hobbton Middle School, the following year, I could not resist. I transferred to my home school district and have been there for the past 20 years. In those years, I have been named Outstanding Middle Grades Mathematics Teacher and have had the honor of representing Hobbton Middle School as their Teacher of the Year on two separate occasions."

Teaching, Powell said, was a no-brainer as a career choice.

"Coming from a family of teachers, I never really considered any other career path," Powell said. "Even today, as I think toward the possibility of retirement and what comes next, I cannot imagine anything that I could possibly enjoy any more than teaching a child who is eager to learn. I watched my mother devoting herself into making certain her classroom and her plans were prepared for her students."

**"We are in desperate need of people to become educators who have a passion for the profession,"**
**— Susan Daughtry Warren**

Powell's sister, Susan Daughtry Warren, is also in the business of education. As a former teacher, she now works with Sampson County Schools as the student services and public relations specialist.

Becoming an educator, Warren said, is very important.

Caitlin Joyner, whose great grandmother was a teacher, is carrying on as a education major at Western Carolina.

"We are in desperate need of people to become educators who have a passion for the profession," Warren attested. "The profession has taken many hits over the last few years. We need people who have that passion for learning to be able to influence and guide our younger generations so they will be more productive citizens in our community."

Warren's husband, Richie, was a career and technical education teacher, but has spent the last three years in the private sector.

"I always enjoyed working with kids and enjoyed education from a hands-on point of view," Richie Warren said. "I learn best hands on and enjoyed sharing that with kids. During my 12 years as an engineer in the telecommunications field, I had the opportunity to volunteer to help with sports in my local district. I enjoyed working with the kids and knew that I would enjoy the school environment. When the opportunity arose for me to enter the classroom I began my teaching career. I found it to be very rewarding and I felt like every day I went home, I had helped someone."

Daugthry's daughter-in-law, Cathy Daughtry, is a first grade teacher at Hobbton Elementary and Powell's daughter, Caitlin Brittany Joyner, is currently pursuing her degree in education at Western Carolina University.

Shirley Darden Hargrove and Josephine Hairr Darden have carried on the family tradition of teaching.

"I've been greatly influenced by my school music teachers," Joyner said. "Stan Benton and Geoffrey Tart are just the two from public schools. Being involved with their classes made me realize that if I could touch one person in the world through music the way they had through their teachings, then I would be happy. The more I thought about it, the more I knew that being a teacher would be the right path for me"

"Growing up I always had my mom, my aunts, and my grandmother telling me all about their experiences as teachers, and I knew for certain I wanted to be a teacher. I guess you could say it's in my blood! It wasn't hard for me to fit these two worlds together – my love of music and my passion for helping others – it all fits."

The entire family has a tradition. On the first day of the school year, they all gather for breakfast at Ola's house — just another part of the family's history.

Reach Kristy D. Carter at 910-592-8137, ext. 2588. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd. Like us on Facebook.

# County building success through long-term planning

**Ed Causey**
Contributing columnist

This year's Insight theme, "Building Success Through the Generations," is particularly appropriate for Sampson County government, as I would expect any local government. For County government, the term would more likely be "Building Success Through Long-Term Planning," as for us there are few actions recommended by staff or decisions made by elected officials that are not reviewed in the framework of what they mean not only to those we serve now, but how we will serve them in the future.

Effective long-term planning is achieved when we employ certain management principles; Sampson County utilizes several. First, the changing circumstances and needs of our citizens/customers/partners necessitate that we constantly evaluate our operations and try to adjust as needed. Second, we try to emphasize the importance of managing outcomes – not necessarily people or situations - and do not allow non-germane considerations to get us sidetracked. Third, we endeavor to make decisions that will have maximum benefit for greatest number of people in the long term. We try to take the long term financial integrity of the county into consideration with every decision, and we constantly strive to anticipate the unintended consequences of any recommendation that we present to the Board of Commissioners. Finally, we cultivate good communications with our funding partners, recognizing the symbiotic relationship where their operational challenges impact us and our challenges impact them.

Several county initiatives — many we have discussed in previous articles precisely because of their long-term nature — illustrate this year's Insight theme:

1. Economic Development is crucial to the long-term viability of Sampson County, and we are pleased that the efforts of our Economic Development Commission Director John Swope and our regional economic development partners, as well as the support and enthusiasm of our Board of Commissioners and advisory board members, have resulted in seven or eight new projects in development. With an investment value of more than $419,000,000, these projects will potentially increase our tax base by nearly 10%. Just as important is the fact that these investments will create over 460 jobs with an average salary of $37,000. A more detailed report of the County's economic development activities are found in the separate Insight article by EDC Director John Swope.

2. Water Infrastructure accessibility and quality plays a vital role in our County's attractiveness to industry, our economic growth, and thus the long-term prosperity of our government and our citizens. More than 30 years ago, the County began the long-term, strategic planning for our public water system, and today we have more than 500 miles of water lines in the ground. However, until this year, we were largely a purchaser of water from other entities. With the addition of two wells that came on line this year, we are now a producer of a significant amount of the water sold. In addition, we have received a Golden Leaf Grant for approximately $500,000 that will allow the development of one additional well. The production of water should enable us over time to facilitate the expansion of our water system into other feasible residential areas as well as provide needed infrastructure for potential industrial usage when those opportunities arise.

3. Capital Reserves The County is responsible for the long term capital maintenance of the buildings for both the community college and the two public school systems, in addition to our own buildings. Several years ago, we estimated that the replacement cost for all of these buildings was approximately $500,000,000, with only a minimum of cash set aside for capital improvements. The Board of Commissioners has diligently considered these needs for several years, and in 2014 they began building reserves to mitigate the future costs for the upkeep and maintenance of our facilities. For the 2015 fiscal year, we have set aside the equivalent of approximately $750,000. Although these monies are being used for improvements at the Expo Center and the Community College, these monies should be available for the capital reserve account in future years unless capital improvements are identified for the current year's budget.

4. A Pay Plan and Classification Study approved in in 2015 will provide nearly $3.7 million dollars of salary increases for our employees over four years. The long-term goal of the plan was multi-fold: to enhance, improve, and maintain a current workforce in a manner that yields an employee base that is highly productive and efficient, with a continued focus on customer service; to recognize the contribution of seasoned, experienced employees that have significant institutional knowledge; and to improve the County's ability to recruit and retain the best employees. Employing strategic implementation strategies which minimize unintended financial liabilities demonstrates the County's commitment to the long-term stability of our local government and keeping the market-based plan current. With the adoption of the FY 2015-16 budget, a permanent employment ceiling was established at a level of 547 permanent positions. Under no circumstance will this employment ceiling be raised without approval of the Board. In fact, the specific plan for pay study implementation calls for reductions in employment, permanent expense reductions, or potential program reductions to fund

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UCare
break the silence
break the cycle

*Our Mission*
*"To break the cycle of domestic violence and sexual assault"*

Providing comprehensive services 24/7 to Sampson County victims, children, and their communities since 1995.

**A Bit of History**

U Care exists because Sampson County people refuse to stand by and watch their community succumb to the vicious cycle of violence that plagues many cities across this nation. Over 20 years ago local leaders saw how family violence, if not addressed, would continue to escalate perpetuating itself into our schools, workplaces, churches and homes. Thanks to their foresight U Care was born and has diligently sought to provide crisis intervention services to anyone needing emergency relief.

Since 1995, when the first employee was hired part-time, the organization has grown to be recognized as one of the most successful domestic violence and sexual assault programs in the state. From their humble beginnings in office space donated by the county U Care and its volunteers began their mission. By March 1996, Pamela Gonzalez, the Executive Director activated U Care's 24 hour crisis line. The crisis line team consisted of 3 bag phones, and 46 trained volunteers. Families needing shelter were either transported to neighboring shelters or to local "safehouses" until U Care's own shelter could be established.

April 1996 volunteers and the Executive Director began renovating the old police station which was donated by City of Clinton rent free to be used as the shelter and offices. Mrs. Gonzalez secured additional grant funding, hired staff, and has continued to provide comprehensive services to all families suffering from family violence for over 20 years.

For years now the majority of the funding for the agency has been through state and federal grants. Unfortunately those avenues are often discounted after a few years forcing shelters to rely heavier on their local supporters to keep their doors open. The financial donations assist our clients who stay in the shelter with food, medical assistance, transportation and sometimes unexpected expenses. Many times our clients have to leave a situation so quickly that they cannot go back to their homes to retrieve their personal belongings. Rather than stay in a violent situation, the choice they have to make is between material possessions and their lives. Once the clients are ready to move on, they need the eventual material essentials to set up a new house like furniture bedding, appliances, household goods, linens, clothing, food, dishes, etc. Your donations are used to DIRECTLY assist our clients in their endeavor to start a new life.

***We need everyone's support now more than ever!***

**Services:**

- **Education Programs**
- **Treatment Programs**
- **Crisis Prevention**
- **Support Groups**
- **Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)**

*****All Victim Services are free regardless of age, gender, nationality, or financial status***

**Current Funding Sources**

U Care is funded with state and federal grants, local mini-grants, community support, the annual reverse drawing, and its Bee Hive Thrift Stores located in Clinton and Newton Grove.

**State and Federal Funders include:**
NC Governor's Crime Commission
Violence Against Women Act
Health and Human Services,
Family Violence Prevention.
NC Council for Women

**Local Resources**
The Sampson County United Way
FEMA
Area business
Local Churches
Concerned Citizens
Four County Electric
SouthRiver Electric Coop.

*Please help us break the silence and end the abuse*

**For more information**
**Contact us at: 910-596-0931**
**24 hour crisis line | www.ucaredv.org**

# EMBRACE THE GOOD LIFE!

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# Planning for future generation success

**Shawn Purvis**
Contributing columnist

Borrowing from an old Greek proverb, famed investor Warren Buffet once said, "Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago." This quote seems appropriate as I reflect on the important planning initiatives the city undertakes and the hopeful outcomes that will ensure generations of success in Clinton.

Several years ago, City Council adopted five strategic focus areas that provide the foundation for making Clinton the perfect place to call home — quality job growth, welcoming neighborhoods and public spaces, affordable and varied housing opportunities, sound and sustainable infrastructure, enhanced quality of life, and financial sustainability. It is within the framework of these focus areas that the city sets goals, plans and prepares, and coordinates resources to fulfill its mission. I cannot stress the importance of the planning component enough as it enables us to focus our resources efficiently toward accomplishing our goals and ensuring success.

In 2015, the city embarked on some of its most critical planning efforts to date. In May, City Council adopted the Clinton 2035 Comprehensive Plan, which represents a guide for the future growth and development of Clinton. More than 600 people participated in the development of the city's comprehensive plan over an 18-month period. The plan addresses all six strategic focus areas in some capacity. Currently, the Clinton Planning Department is working to revise the city's land development ordinance to align it with the comprehensive plan, which will facilitate new development across all sectors- residential, commercial, and industrial. Some of the changes and concepts introduced to the city's ordinances include mixed-use zoning to encourage compatible commercial and residential development (e.g. second story residential downtown), provisions to allow for easier development of townhomes and other residential units, and light manufacturing zoning to encourage various industrial growth. The Clinton 2035 Comprehensive Plan also addresses creation of public spaces to add to our quality of life and installation of infrastructure to support growth while sustaining our water resources.

Making changes to the city's land use ordinance is only one element of planning and preparation for the city's future. To identify specific actions that support the six focus areas, we have developed a strategic plan that identifies goals for each department that align with City Council's mission and focus areas. Associated with each goal are specific objectives, strategies, and performance indicators. The objectives present specific directions toward achieving goals and the strategies identify specific actions or tasks for each objective. Coupled, these two elements of the strategic plan translate into actual programs and projects the city can implement. Of course, we need to monitor the success of these programs and projects so we developed performance indicators to help demonstrate the city's progress toward achieving its goals. The indicators will eventually present trends and patterns to help us determine if we are heading in the right direction. Ultimately, the strategic plan provides a specific map at the departmental level for operating within City Council's focus areas.

Within the strategic focus area of financial sustainability, the city has been diligently planning and the positive results are now becoming clear. The comprehensive plan and strategic plan provide guidance for what we hope to accomplish and how we plan to achieve our goals. Maintaining financial sustainability ensures that we have the tools and resources necessary to be successful. While the city has long had a strong financial standing, we increased our efforts in 2010 with the development of a complete capital improvement plan (CIP) and the restructuring of our operating budget development process. The CIP represents a multiyear forecast of the city's capital needs and not only identifies capital projects but also the financing required for the projects and their impact on the operating budget. The restructuring of the annual operating budget development process requires more planning and preparation at a departmental level to identify needs and costs associated with the strategic focus areas. These financial planning efforts have allowed the city to reduce its budget for three consecutive years while improving services and adding programs. The city's six consecutive GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards and increasing fund balance also illustrate the results of these efforts. We believe our current budget establishes a responsible baseline within the current economy and we are exploring new options to lessen the financial burden further for our citizens.

In closing, our planning is important. It is through these efforts that we prepare, learn, and adapt for our success and that of future generations. The efforts of our planning are beginning to bear fruit and that will help us ensure the success of those that follow us. It is that thought that reminds me of a statement made by John F. Kennedy during his 1962 State of the Union Address: "The time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining."

For more information, please contact the Clinton City Manager at 910-592-1961.

## Planning

From page 8B

$1,193,391 of the plan's implementation costs. To date, $874,486.55 of recommendations have been approved by the Board of Commissioners, and it will be my responsibility, as County Manager, to manage the process and see that pledged reductions for succeeding years are accomplished before budget approval.

With an eye to long-term fiscal challenges, the pay study implementation plan also included changes to post-employment benefits which will result in significant cost savings for the county. County staff will bring specific information on these savings to our Board of Commissioners in March.

5. A Business Personal Property Compliance Review program has twice been the topic of discussions between the Board of Commissioners and representatives of the Department of Revenue over the past five years. As government revenue sources diminish, fiscal stewardship becomes even more important for the long-term stability of our budget, and consequently, the County's obligation to equitability and tax fairness in business listings, as well in real estate and motor vehicles. The values for motor vehicles are assessed every year, and real estate is evaluated every eight years. Likewise, if we want to truly have a tax base that is equitable and generates the appropriate proportionate amount of tax, some sort of compliance program needed to be established for business listings. County Administration and the Tax Office were charged this fiscal year with establishing a system that emphasized training and customer service. In this regard, we advertised and held two public training sessions in 2015 and one in 2016 to provide County businesses with guidance in correctly listing their business personal property. In addition, we are establishing a separate business listing department and staffing it with three employees. The additional staff will give us more time to work with individual taxpayers regarding the requirements of proper listing as well as offering one-on-one assistance when needed. The emphasis here is on customer service.

We believe that our long-term approach to our challenges ensures that the County's financial integrity is sound. This view was recently substantiated by the bond rating process conducted for a bond refunding project in 2015, wherein the County received an A rating. In their rating, the bonding agencies cited the fiscal responsibility of the pay study and the efforts made regarding allocating for capital reserves as some of the positives for the positive bond rating. The bond review also recognized the positive direction that the administration staff receives from the Board of Commissioners. We also believe that all five of the initiatives highlighted above demonstrate the County's commitment to long term planning and fiscal integrity. They also demonstrate our interest and effort in providing the best quality of life possible for our citizens.

This does not mean that we do not have challenges. For example, our debt is reasonable for a county our size; however, at the same time, it would behoove us to strive to continue to reduce this debt as much as possible in the upcoming years. Our employees should take pride in the pay plan that was implemented; however, because of the changes in benefits offered to our employees, it will be extremely important that we monitor more closely the cost of living and ensure that salaries are adjusted to reflect market conditions on a more regular basis. At the end of the day, we recognize that Sampson County government is here to serve our citizens, and that customer service must be our emphasis. But, to most skillfully perform our duties, most successfully safeguard our fiscal and physical resources, and most cost-effectively operate our government (i.e., at the lowest tax rate), we must recruit and retain the best employees, whose honor and privilege it is to serve our citizens.

Ed Causey is the Sampson County Manager.

Courtesy photo

**From left, Perry Gillispie discusses the CCP with Janna Bass, coordinator of Special Projects, and Blair Hairr.**

# Career and college promises to make SCC wise option

**By Dan Grubb**
SCC

Success in today's global economy may require a two-or four-year degree, a certificate or diploma. Through Career & College Promise, qualified high-school-age students in Sampson County have the opportunity to pursue these options, tuition free, while they are in high school, allowing them to get a jumpstart on their workplace and college preparation.

Sampson Community College, through the Career and College Promise program provides seamless dual enrollment education for eligible students, in order to accelerate completion of college certificates, diplomas and associate degrees that lead to college transfer or provide entry-level jobs. College can be very costly in a young person's life, but with the aid of the CCP at Sampson Community College, students have the opportunity to advance on their educational paths, while saving time and money.

SCC hired a career specialist last semester to help students in their college career. Since then, someone from SCC has been positioned in each of Sampson County's high schools on a weekly basis and the CCP program has experienced a drastic growth in student numbers. There are 230+ students enrolled in CCP now, for a total of more than 1,000 credit hours.

"Our headcount this semester is up about 5 percent. The increase this spring is primarily in part-time-students, in large part Career and College Promise (CCP) students," says SCC President Paul Hutchins. "I want to acknowledge the great work of our Career Specialist, Perry Gillispie, and Director of Admissions, Blair Hairr, for all they have done in working with the city and county high schools to recruit CCP students. Meeting the learning needs of these students has a great impact on our enrollment."

"CCP is a great way for students to get a jump start on college without paying the tuition fee," says Gillispie. "This program also allows students to learn what college is like before they graduate high school. This is beneficial as they move forward and determine their next educational step. I hope to become an integral part within each high school so students know and understand the benefits of this opportunity."

As the nucleus of Student Support at Sampson Community College, the Student Services department strives to assist students with various aspects of their education from pre-admission and enrollment through graduation, career or transfer planning. Student Services provides a staff available to help students achieve their goals, while developing self-direction and independence. CCP course credits enable students to reduce their course load in the freshman and sophomore years allowing a student to devote more time on courses they may find more challenging.

Blair Hairr, director of Admissions at SCC, says, "Our vision is to serve and assist high school students and staff primarily with Career and College Promise (CCP), and postsecondary education, on a weekly basis at each of the local high schools."

Recently a mini-grant was awarded to the program by the SCC Foundation to help with getting the word out to potential benefactors of the program and help it grow and continue being successful at SCC. For more information about the Career and College Promise (CCP) program or student services at SCC which handles admissions, placement testing, counseling, registration and records, financial aid, Veterans assistance, career counseling, disability services, transfer assistance, and coordination of student activities, please call 910-592-8081 or visit www.sampsoncc.edu.

# Hospital a significant part of county's economic engine

**Shawn Howerton**
Contributing columnist

Even if you've never been a patient at Sampson Regional Medical Center, you are probably impacted in more ways than you realize by the care we deliver each day. That's because your local community hospital is a significant part of Sampson County's economic engine.

It takes approximately 525 FTEs (full time equivalent employees) to make us tick 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. That equates to nearly $26 million in salaries, and those dollars are generated back into our local economy when our employees purchase homes, buy groceries, go to the movies, dine in our restaurants, or shop downtown. Another several million dollars are invested into other community businesses simply due to the supplies and services we require to operate on a daily basis. I tell you this, not to pat our backs, but to emphasize how important our hospital is to this community.

Sampson Regional is one of only a handful of independent hospitals remaining in North Carolina. We are proud to be among the few, and we are committed to preserving our independence. Why? Because it's the right thing to do for our patients, our employees, and those we serve throughout Sampson County.

We take seriously our responsibility as your hospital. Our goal is to be this community's Provider of Choice for every service we're capable of providing. And we understand that we have to earn that. At the center of everything we do, there is one simple question we ask of ourselves: "What's best for our patients?" To us, this means focusing on safety, quality, and patient satisfaction and moving the needle above national benchmarks for those measures. We also recognize stewardship as one of our core values; therefore, we strive to be fiscally responsible with our resources and facilities as we effect change.

If you've visited us lately, you've probably noticed some changes. We're making substantial investments to improve the way we deliver care. During fall 2014, we kicked off an 18-month project to implement a brand new Electronic Health Record (EHR). Through this very detailed project, we have evaluated every system, process, and function of our inpatient and outpatient services to build a more robust patient record. Our new system will lead to full electronic documentation, more efficient workflows for staff, stronger quality and safety controls, less redundancy for patients, and future capabilities offering more integration with other community and regional health systems. Our "GO LIVE" date for this new system is May 1, 2016. We are greatly anticipating this implementation, which will deliver more continuity between our departments and improve the way patients move through our system.

Our IT systems aren't the only thing under construction right now. We recently completed Phase 2 of our four-phase Emergency Room renovation. During the first two phases, we updated the furnishings and restrooms in our ER lobby. The newly designed yet smaller lobby allowed room for construction of six new treatment rooms. These additional rooms will allow increased opportunity for us to direct bed patients soon after they are registered. In March, we'll enter phases 3 and 4 of our project. These phases will bring an improved floor plan for patient and staff flow. Curtained bays will be converted to private treatment areas to enhance patient comfort and privacy, and we'll increase our trauma room space. These renovations will give us greater capacity for today's patient volume. Our original Emergency Department was designed for about 17,000 visits annually, but over the years, we've reached a volume nearly double that number.

The ER renovation is one among many other

See HOSPITAL | 11B

# Sampson County Parks and Rec thriving

**Raymond Spell**
County Parks and Recreation

Sampson County Parks and Recreation has a long-standing history for improving the quality of life of the residents in the community. The activities of Parks and Recreation continually aim to satisfy the department's mission "To maintain and enhance the quality of life of all citizens of Sampson County by ensuring the provision of a parks and recreation system." By providing activities to youth, in addition to recreation activities for adults, Sampson County Parks and Recreation has met many of our short- and long-term goals. As per Sampson County's comprehensive Parks and Recreation master plan:

"The overall role of the county is to provide recreation services for all of the citizens within the county, to work and coordinate with each municipality and community in order to provide the best recreational services within each district, and to promote the maximum utilization of existing facilities as well as explore new opportunities for recreational facilities and open space."

Therefore, we believe that increasing our department's presence within the community has greatly improved the well-being and overall quality of life of the residents of Sampson County.

A recent analysis of the activities offered to the community suggests that there is a 10% growth in all sports. For our youth, ages 4 to 15, we offer a variety of opportunities. Dixie Youth Baseball and Dixie Softball, tee-ball, sling arm and coach pitch currently has more than 600. Furthermore, our youth basketball teams are at an all-time high with 350 participants, while the female volleyball and male football activities for youth have 200 and 350 participants, respectively.

Not only has our department greatly increased the number of youth participating in outdoor activities, we have also re-purposed multiple facilities throughout Sampson County to increase the number of resources at our disposal. The facilities that we use are: Hobbton Middle School, Hobbton High School, Midway Middle School, Midway Elementary School, Clement Elementary School, Old Midway Elementary School, Roseboro-Salemburg Middle School, Salemburg Elementary School, Roseboro Elementary School, Lake Wood High School, Union Intermediate School, and Union Middle School. Two additional facilities that we utilize are the Western District Park in Roseboro, NC and Weeks Park in Newton Grove, NC.

In conjunction to our department's ability to recruit many new youth participants, we have also attracted additional volunteers to assist our staff in overseeing these activities. To date, we have more than 30 volunteers that represent a broad demographic that allows our department to reach youths of all race, ethnicity and socio-economic backgrounds. Recruiting willing volunteers is a limiting factor for organizing youth outdoor activities; however, the public has risen to the occasion and demonstrated an appreciation towards improving the activities provided to our county's youth.

More amazingly, we are able to offer all of these activities on a yearly budget of $600,000. This budget provides our staffs salaries, in addition to the operating cost associated with maintaining these public activities. We are grateful that the public is willing to provide us with this budget allowance and we are confident that the return of investment is greater than the initial sum.

As we look forward into the coming year, we plan to launch adult coed volleyball, offer USSSA baseball and softball tournaments. It should also be noted that our county has been selected to host the Statewide Athletic Committee Sectional and State Tournament for 12U girls' basketball tournament. This is an excellent opportunity to increase the State's awareness of our exemplary Parks and Recreation department, in conjunction to providing our local businesses with an opportunity to increase their revenue. As we continue to move through 2016, our department will strive to provide the public with the best service possible and as a result, we will continue to fulfill the mission outlined above. Stay tuned for future updates!

# Partnership for Children impacting young lives

**By Dr. Victoria Byrd**

Amid the busy downtown streets of Clinton is what some have tapped as the best kept secret in Sampson County. Now over seventeen years old, The Partnership for Children continues its visionary pursuit to improve the lives of the youngest citizens in Sampson County. The pursuit to create an early childhood network with inclusive services for young children and their families has not come easy. But like any work of true value the investment of staff, board members and limited resources has paid great dividends in the success that has been accomplished in the lives of young children.

As with any pursuit, becoming and remaining progressive has been one of the Partnership's secret ingredients. Always reaching above the bar, the Partnership now finds itself a pivotal resource and structure for parents, child care providers and the community at large. For instance, where else could a child care provider go to check out an activity theme box that has an entire lesson provided? Who else provides valuable and inclusive trainings for child care providers on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, Transition to Kindergarten, and North Carolina's Early Learning Standards for birth through five years of age? And, where could parents find classes and services on potty training, discipline, and the importance of child safety restraints? The Partnership for Children caters to and meets all of these needs and more for parents, child care providers, early childhood college students and the community.

With progress also comes adaptability. The Partnership has undergone and continues to undergo changes. As the ethnic and cultural character of the county has changed over the years, the Partnership has worked to collaborate and implement services to improve the lives of the new arrivals. Currently the Partnership has four bilingual staff members who work one-on-one with the Latino population. There is never a time when services cannot be rendered because of a language barrier.

As the gatekeeper of quality early childhood services in Sampson County, the Partnership makes it a requirement to remain innovative. Recognizing the multidimensional challenges of the residents of Sampson County has become second-nature to the Partnership. As a public-private non-profit organization, the Partnership addresses these needs in an open-minded approach and is willing to try new things, to take on the hardest problems and tackle them head on. The Partnership's life-saving Child Passenger Safety Seat Program and the Parents As Teachers Home Visitation Multicultural Outreach Project are a two examples of the Partnership's innovative approaches.

A worker in the Child Care Center shares information about dinosaurs with young children.

It goes without saying that the Partnership for Children is extremely successful. Every year, the Partnership makes a profound impact on the lives of hundreds of children and their families. The organization has a reputation for delivering quality services and for equipping its clients with the tools to succeed in life. Established in 1998, the Partnership reflects the diversity of the 21st Century by providing services to ALL children 0-5 years of age and their families. Embracing diversity and resisting the temptation to create cookie-cutter programs and services has been key to the Partnership's growth and innovation. In generations to come, the name "Partnership for Children of Sampson County" will invoke memories that are dear and for some deeply personal.

Last but not least, the Partnership for Children prides itself in upholding standards of quality early care and educational services for the county's youngest and most vulnerable citizens. For today, upholding higher standards, embracing diversity, being successful, remaining innovative and progressive has proven valuable and ensure that all stakeholders are held together by a common vision: all children in Sampson County have access and resources needed to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

The Partnership for Children of Sampson County is located at 211 West Main Street, Clinton, NC. For more information on programs and services offered by the Partnership for Children of Sampson County, please call 910-592-9399.

Dr. Victoria Byrd is executive director of the Sampson County Partnership for Children.

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# Hospital

From page 10B

construction projects underway throughout the hospital. Some of our projects are aimed at regulatory compliance, and others are simply for the comfort of our patients and visitors. Within the past few months, we've painted the hallways in all main corridors and updated our Obstetrics Unit with new flooring and paint.

The last year has been one of much growth for Sampson Regional. We opened a new family practice in Newton Grove in an effort to improve access to care in the more rural and medically underserved areas of our county. We kicked off our Graduate Medical Education (GME) program with a dermatology residency and transitional year internship, and this summer we'll receive our first class of family medicine residents. These physician training programs allow Sampson Regional to introduce new providers to the community and make medical care more accessible. While we continue recruiting for some physician openings, we were pleased last year to bring several new providers to our team— two general surgeons who opened Sampson Surgical Services, an orthopedic surgeon who joined Huff Orthopaedics, two new hospitalists for inpatient care, a PA for our new clinic in Newton Grove, and a physician leader for our GME program.

We have great expectations for 2016 as we continue navigating the business of a rural community hospital in the sea of healthcare. It is our privilege to serve this community, and we appreciate each time you choose Sampson Regional for your healthcare needs. Your support is valuable to the sustainability of our local healthcare system, and our commitment is to earn your support each and every day.

Shawn Howerton, MD is Chief Executive & Medical Officer at Sampson Regional Medical Center.


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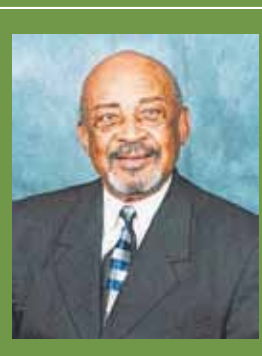

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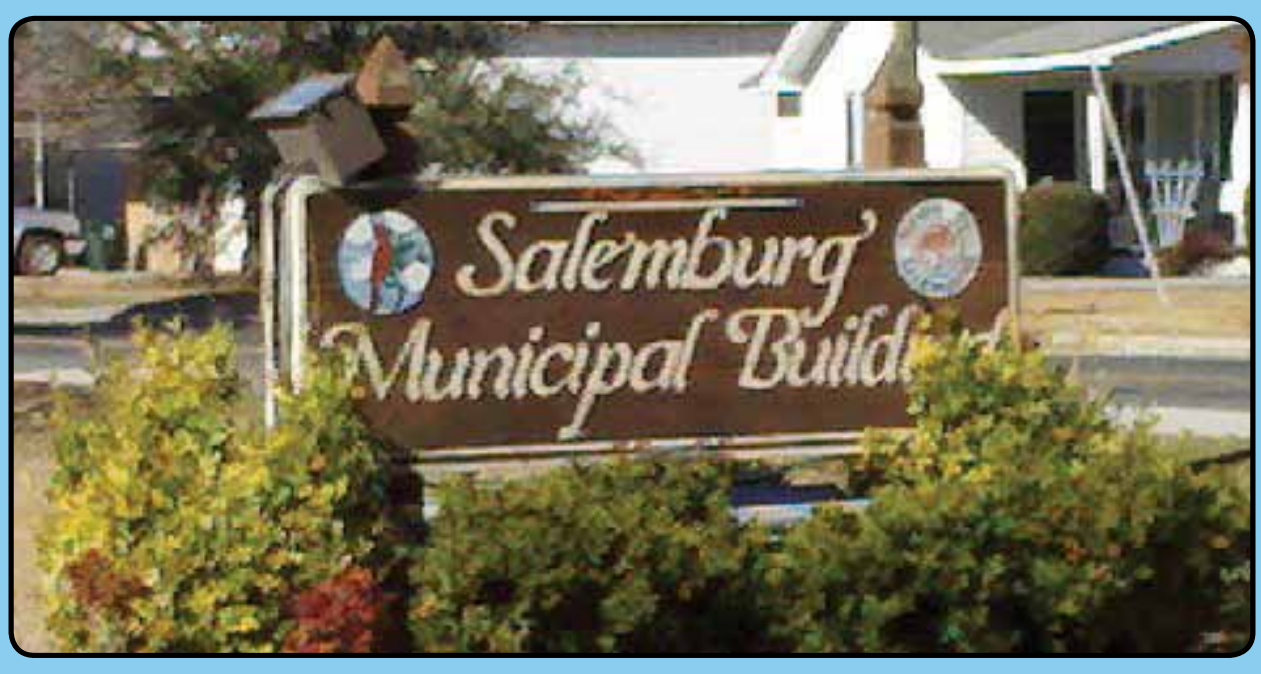

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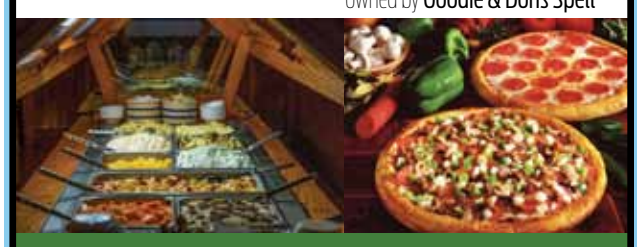

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# A true family farm

## For generations, Boney brothers bring life to Bonnetsville

**By Chris Berendt**
cberendt@civitasmedia.com

The Boney family farm is located on a large expanse off Bonnetsville Road, just outside of the Clinton city limits, a true family venture that has grown significantly from its 40-acre beginnings. Diversification has been key to keeping pace with a fluctuating — and sometimes downright tumultuous — farm economy, but Richard "Dick" Boney said that hard work and love of the land's history has everything to do with the farm's longevity.

"My daddy and my uncle started it in the 40s," said Boney of the first iteration of what is now a contract pork, poultry and livestock operation, complete with row crops. "Now it's me and my brother Durwood."

Dick's son Garrett and Durwood's sons Clint and Brandon are also involved. Durwood has lost some of his sight over the years, so he plays mostly a supervisory role with Dick, who also is still very much hands-on.

The 40-acre operation has grown exponentially over the years. Corn, beans and grain are grown on the land, which is also home to about 7,000 hogs and 30,000 turkeys, contracted with Prestage Farms, as well as cattle.

"It's gotten bigger," Boney said. "You have to have a contract now."

Boney Farm has been on contract with Prestage since about 1990, a necessity to keep the operation afloat.

"You have to diversify," he remarked.

Boney's father Howard ran

See FAMILY | 5C

**Boney Farm is located off Bonnetsville Road just outside of Clinton. It is currently owned and operated by brothers Richard and Durwood. They inherited the farm from their father,Howard, and now run it with Richard's son Garrett and Durwood's sons Clint and Brandon.'**
Chris Berendt | Sampson Independent

Courtesy photo
**The Boney children: Dick and Durwood holding, from left, Linda, Joan and Carol.**

Courtesy photo
**Carnett Boney atop the tractor in the old days.**


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# Jackson, Williamson giving back to agriculture community

**By Kristy D. Carter**
kcarter@civitasmedia.com

Ronnie Jackson and Kermit Williamson have both worked with, and been a part of, daily farming life in Sampson County for the majority of their adult careers.

Jackson is the owner and operator of Clinton Truck and Tractor, while Williamson is the owner and operator of Sampson Farmer's Hardware. Both men are giants in the agriculture industry, from helping organize the farm expo for many years to providing local farmers with the supplies they need to run their farming businesses.

Jackson grew up in the northern part of Sampson County and graduated from Midway High School in 1960. Growing up in the rural part of the county, Jackson said he learned a great deal about farming, both at home and at school. After graduating from high school, he went on to attend and graduate from North Carolina State University with a degree in agriculture engineering

Immediately after graduating from college, Jackson said he started working for a farming business. Having been from Sampson County, Jackson said he jumped at the opportunity to work with Clinton Truck and Tractor, then owned and operated by the Williams family.

"I worked on the farm my whole life and I knew farming was something I always wanted to be a part of," Jackson attested.

In 1972, Jackson said, the Williams family needed a manager for the business and they thought he was just the man for the job. Jackson continued working for the Williams family as the manager of the business until he eventually was able to buy them out; he now owns the business.

"I was lucky enough to increase the performance at the business and then I eventually bought the Williams family out," Jackson said during an interview early one morning from his office.

According to Jackson, farming starts early around Sampson County. He isn't much for getting to work after 8 a.m. because he said the day starts as soon as the sun comes up. Normally, he said, he's in his office no later than 7:30 a.m. and ready to start the day that is ahead.

Many years ago, so far back Jackson couldn't recall the exact date, he and some other local businessmen from the area, including George Upton, started the Sampson County Ag Expo. Jackson said they originally started the expo as just a small event, but with time, the event grew into something pretty significant.

"It turned out to be more than we thought," Jackson said. "We started in the one building and eventually we grew into two other buildings."

The expos became large undertakings and lasted for about 10 years. In the expo's time, Jackson said enough money was raised to build the current Agri-Exposition Center, which has carried on the tradition, hosting events, family gatherings and other type of expos throughout the year.

"The expos has a lot to do with the success of the Exposition Center," Jackson shared.

In his more than 40 years of working in the farming industry, Jackson said he has seen many changes. Small farms have gotten larger and there are fewer farmers now than there was when Jackson first began his career.

"Less farmers are farming more land," he pointed out. "At one time, when farmers would come in they thought they had a lot with a 100 acre farm, and they did. Now, a 1,000 acre farm is small compared to the larger farms we have around here."

Farming, Jackson said, was once just about row crops. Not anymore. According to Jackson, he is seeing more farmers involved in the livestock and hog industry. Farms are growing from the field to houses of animals.

"There is nothing we can do that is any more important than farming," Jackson stressed. "It's because of farming that everyone is fed and clothed."

Locally, he added, farmers are able to provide for families of the business and Jackson said not many other countries can say the same.

"Who can do better than we do with farming?" Jackson asked. "Agriculture is what this country is based on."

Through the years, Jackson has been actively involved in the Sampson County Friends of Agriculture, as well as local and state activist groups and the local Rotary Club.

"I've slowed down a lot over the last few years," Jackson said. "I have developed a great interest in solar farms and what they are taking away from the local farms. Solar farms take up a good deal of farming land."

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent
**Clinton Truck and Tractor, along with owner Ronnie Jackson, has provided equipment to the farming industry for many years.**

The threats that farmers are now being faced with, Jackson said, are near and dear to his heart. He has always fought for the farm and farmers and says he will continue to do so.

"Farmers are some of the best people in the world," Jackson said. "Farmers have been through some hard times, but you know, the best move I ever made was becoming a farmer. I'll retire when I don't enjoy doing this anymore and just don't think that will ever happen."

### Kermit Williamson

Williamson was born and raised in Clinton. The pillar in the Sampson County community said he has "lived here my whole life."

After graduating from Clinton High School, Williamson pursued furthering his education at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill.

See JACKSON | 3C

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent
**Ronnie Jackson spends his days working at Clinton Truck and Tractor and helping local farmers in the industry.**

Kristy D. Carter|Sampson Independent
**Kermit Williamson took over the family business, Sampson Hardware, after his father died. He continues to serve the Sampson County residents with all their farming needs.**


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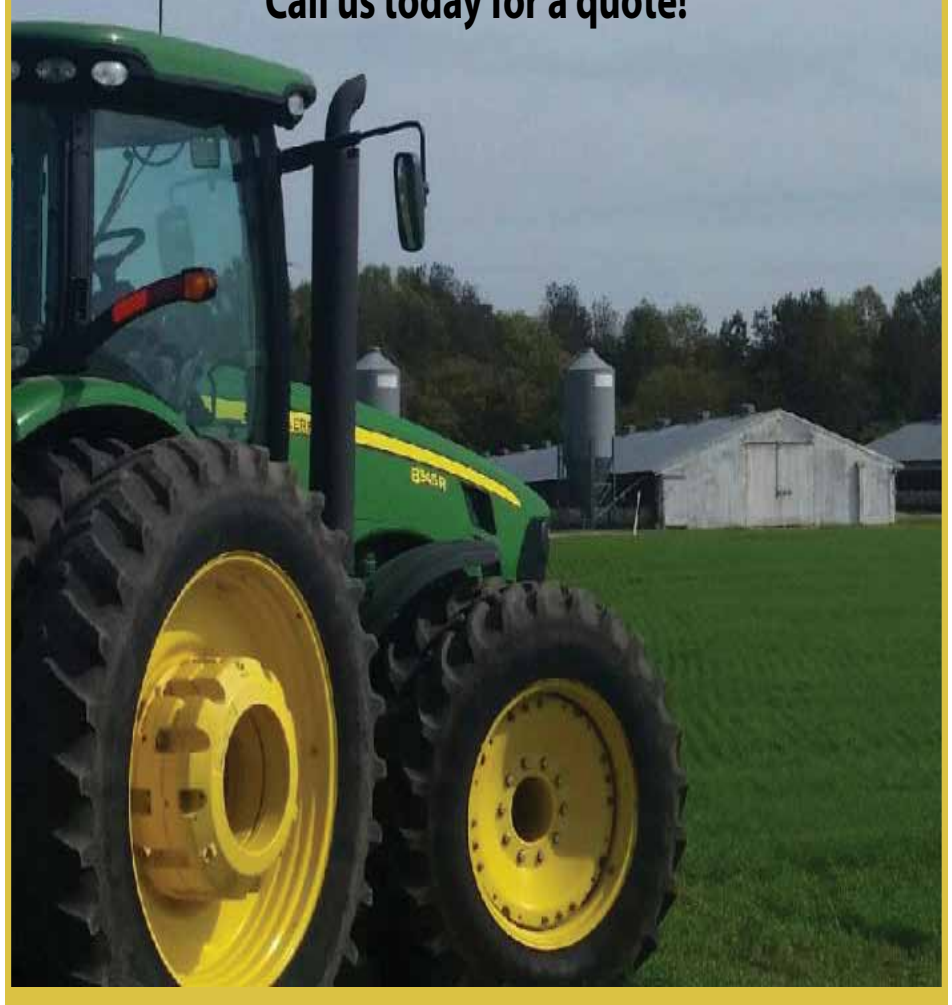

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# Jackson

From page 2C

He grew up in the family business, helping his father run Sampson Hardware, a business his father, Kermit Dewitt Williamson, Sr. started in 1947.

Williamson has younger sisters and after college, his father passed, leaving the family business to Williamson so that he could help take care of his mother and younger siblings. Williamson took over Sampson Hardware in 1975 and has been at the store every day since.

"It wasn't my intentions to run the family business," Williamson acknowledged. "And I surely didn't envision staying here this long. But, Clinton is a great place to raise a family. I kinda took over the family business out of the responsibility I have for my family."

Unfortunately, Williamson said, the family business won't carry on once he retires. He has two daughters, but neither are interested in returning to Clinton to take on the hardware store or the farming venture.

Sampson Hardware provides many of the supplies local farmers need to run their farming operations. Williamson said he has made it his goal to make sure he provides everything right here locally, so the local farmers can stay in business.

Over the years, Williamson said, there have been many changes to the farming industry. The biggest change the business man says he has seen is the change from things being done by hand to being done mechanically.

"Now, everything is mechanical," Williamson said. "Hogs and turkeys are fed with a machine. There just isn't that need for farm labor anymore."

When Williamson was growing up, he said it was young boys and girls who worked in the field and cropped tobacco, but not anymore. Now, a machine crops the tobacco for the farmer, which helps the farmer save on labor costs.

Because things can be done mechanically now, Williamson said the amount of product farmers are able to yield has increased. This is bringing more money in for farmers.

For those who have visited the hardware store, Williamson said you will find his mother there everyday, except Thursdays when she gets her hair done.

"She's always right here, helping keep this place going," Williamson said.

Not only does the hardware supply farmers with items, Williamson has been a farmer himself. He raises hogs and has grown small field crops like tobacco, corn and soy beans. Most of that farm land is now rented out.

"Agriculture presents a good lifestyle," Williamson said. "Agriculture has helped a lot of people become successful and helped families survive."

In addition to being a businessman in the community, Williamson served as a Sampson County commissioner for 12 years.

"Serving allowed me to have a unique perspective on how important agriculture is to Sampson County," Williamson said about his tenure as commissioner.

Agriculture, Williamson said, has provided a lot of jobs for residents of Sampson County and it's one aspect about the county that he hopes will continue to grow.

Reach Kristy D. Carter at 910-592-8137, ext. 2588. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd. Like us on Facebook.

Courtesy photo

**Farmers participate in a rally hosted by NC Farm Families.**

# Protecting farm families

**By Chase Jordan**
cjordan@civitasmedia.com

Each day, many people throughout America enjoy the taste of pork on their plates becuase of North Carolina farmers, who rely on the work to feed their own families as well as those across the state, nation and even world.

But from time to time, several environmentalist groups may challenge or question their practices. NC Farm Families, a statewide organization, wants to put a stop to that. Founded in the summer, it was created to speak up for the farmers and is a coalition of producers, friends and families.

"It was created to stand up for and speak out for the farmers who are under attack by ant-agricultural activist groups," said Farm Families President Ed Emory. In 2009, Emory retired as the Cooperative Extension agent and director in Duplin County. Now, he's involved with agricultural interest in eastern North Carolina.

"I'm not a farmer, but through my work with Extension, I know what farm families mean, what they do and how they work," he said.

Under the leadership of Emory, one of the first accomplishments was a rally in Kenansville in 2015. More than 1,200 farm families attended the event to show support.

According to the organization, more than 80 percent of North Carolina's pork farms are owned and operated by solo farm families.

One of those farmers is James Lamb. He became a contract nursery grower in 1998 and operates an 8-acre hog farm.

"It allows hog farmers such as myself to have a voice," Lamb said about NC Farm Families."Some of the anti-hog people are fairly organized."

The total acreage of the land is about 75 and was in his family for three generations. On one day, he has around 3,000. Lamb said he follows rules when it comes to management manners such as pumping his lagoon.

"I'm probably doing a better job when it comes to managing the water and the environment," he said. "I'm totally regulated and monitored."

Lamb mentioned how farmers are picked on, but he believes it's not the problem. "Scientifically, one of the biggest problems is urban sprawl," he said about more building development on rural land.

Advocates believe those operators use preservation methods and compassion for livestock a top priority. Also they believe these farmers produce quality products which are in high demand not only in the state, but throughout the United States and throughout the world.

Courtesy photo

**Gov. Pat McCrory shows support for NC Farm Families.**

The North Carolina Pork Council supports NC Farm Families by providing financial help to the organization. Deborah Johnson, chief executive officer of the organization, said the board is behind the organization when it comes to opposition.

"There's groups that are misguided," Johnson said. "They believe there's impacts to the

See PROTECTING | 4C


# Prestage Farms, Inc.
## *3 Generations Growing Strong*

Prestage Farms
est. 1983

Photo Courtesy of NC State

Top: Mr. & Mrs. Prestage honored by NCSU for philanthropic efforts. l to R: Scott Prestage, John Prestage, Bill Prestage, Marsha Prestage, and Dr. Ron Prestage

Left: Kate Prestage Poplin and Zach Prestage help serve Prestage turkey products at NCSU Poultry Science Club fundraiser during Ag-Awareness Week.

Below: Kate Prestage Poplin provides remarks as Prestage turkeys are delivered to the Food Bank in Raleigh.

Photo Courtesy of NC State

Prestage Farms, Inc. was founded as a family-owned, family-operated business and it remains so today. The company was found in 1983 by Bill and Marsha Prestage along with their sons Scott and John. The founding of Prestage Farms of South Carolina in 1994, marked Dr. Ron Prestage's joining the company as President of the newest division. Each member of the family brings their own unique skill set to the running of this dynamic business. John Prestage currently serves as Senior Vice President, Scott Prestage is Vice President—Turkey Division, and Dr. Ron Prestage is the President of both Prestage Farms of South Carolina and Prestage Farms of Mississippi.

Today, the third generation of the Prestage family is poised to follow in their parents footsteps. Already, the two oldest grandchildren, Kate Prestage Poplin and Zach Prestage, have joined the company. Kate Prestage Poplin is in Sales & Marketing at Prestage Foods in St. Pauls, NC while Zach Prestage is the Production Coordinator for Prestage Farms of South Carolina. In addition to Kate and Zach, several of John and Scott's children are spending their summers working as interns in various departments learning the business from the ground up. Kaylin Prestage has interned in the accounting and business office and Ben, Bill, Max, and Billy Prestage have all done swine production internships with plans to return and work in other departments.

With three generations working together to operate this family farming operation, the future of Prestage Farms appears bright for many years to come.

**We are proud of our People, Pork, and Poultry!**

# Farm policy issues to track in 2016

**From the NC Pork Council**

Thanks to the elections, 2016 could be a policy roller coaster according to many political pundits. Here in the election battleground state of North Carolina, many in the business of agriculture are trying to understand how they might be impacted by this roller coaster ride.

A recently published story from an online and business editor at Farm Journal Media sheds some light on what policy issues farmers should be monitoring in 2016. With insight from an agricultural law expert and a policy analyst, the business editor says that one of the top issues to watch is trade.

Deborah Johnson of the N.C. Pork Council agrees. "Pork produced in the United States is recognized internationally as the highest quality and safest," she said. "With the world's demand for pork and our ability to produce quality pork products efficiently, the U.S. has become the number one exporter of pork in the world and well positioned to capture a significant share of the growing global pork market."

These exports provide direct economic benefit, according to economists. Iowa State University economist Dermot Hayes estimates that U.S. pork prices in 2014 were almost $63 per head higher than they would have been in the absences of exports. It's also estimated that about 110,000 domestic jobs are the result of U.S. pork exports.

The key to growing exports is new and expanded market access through trade agreements, Johnson said. She points to a graph that shows the increase in both volume and value of U.S. exports of pork and pork products since 1989, the year the U.S. implemented the free trade agreement with Canada and started opening international markets for value-added agriculture products.

"In 1989 the U.S. began using bilateral and regional trade agreements to open foreign markets," she said. "Today we ship more pork to the 20 nations with which the U.S. has Free Trade Agreements than to the rest of the world combined."

Johnson added that the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement offers the opportunity to continue growing pork exports. "TPP includes 11 countries in addition to the U.S. and these countries account for nearly 40 percent of the global GDP," she said. "By reducing tariffs and opening new markets for American agricultural products through this agreement, the U.S. pork industry could see exponential growth in exports to the TPP countries."

Courtesy photo

**Pork is usually the meat of choice in China. It accounts for nearly three-quarters of Chinese meat consumption. During a 2015 agricultural trade mission to China, North Carolina participants took part in a product show where they learned more about the many cuts of pork and varieties of products that Chinese consumers prefer. NC Secretary of Commerce John Skvarla, on left, participated in the trade mission.**

As to the other farm policy issues on the 2016 watch list from the Farm Journal's online and business editor Anna-Lisa Laca, here's the full list.

**Clean Water Act**

Turn your eyes to the Des Moines Water Works lawsuit. Attorney and ag law expert John Dillard says this case will tell us what we need to know about the reach of the Clean Water Act. Des Moines Water Works is suing drainage districts in three rural Iowa counties for increased levels of nitrates in their water. "The suit alleges that excess nitrogen is coming from tiled fields," Dillard explains. "Because they can't target farmers for this pollution, Water Works is arguing that the water leaving the drains is a point source of pollution." This is the first case of its kind and could have major implications for farmers.

**WOTUS**

A new twist to the Clean Water Act is the Waters of the U.S. Rule (WOTUS). Heavily debated and opposed by agriculture groups, WOTUS is at a stalled point that won't be resolved any time soon. "WOTUS is held up in court," Dillard says. "In 2016, we'll see some movement in the litigation, but it's not likely we'll see a solution this year."

Courtesy photo

**Pork is a key NC agricultural export and of one the top markets for pork is Hong Kong/China. To learn more about that market, NC pork producers participated in an agricultural trade mission to Hong Kong/China in 2015. Shown here are Chad Herring of Mount Olive and John Prestage of Clinton as they toured the meat section of a Hong Kong market .**

**Nutrient Management**

Another big issue facing agriculture? Activists, who are working to target livestock facilities as they did recently in Yakima, Wash. Cow Palace dairy was the first dairy to be targeted under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), but Dillard says "copycat lawsuits are spreading throughout the West." The lawsuits allege that spreading dairy manure in excess of agronomic uptake rates amounts to open dumping of solid waste, which would violate RCRA. Proactive tip: Have your nutrient management plan ready to go, and give a copy to your lawyer.

**Trade: TPP, TTIP, Cuba**

The Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement was signed by President Obama on Feb. 3. However, policy analyst Roger Bernard with Informa Economics told Top Producer Seminar attendees we won't see a vote anytime soon, and Dillard agrees. "Mitch McConnell has already made it clear he's not going to bring it up for a vote before the election," Bernard said. Both agree it could even be 2017 before the deal is finished. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, a trade deal with Europe, won't be completed anytime soon either, according to Bernard. "TPP and TTIP can help address trade problems that aren't related to currency but other matters, to help increase export sales." While trade restrictions are slowly easing in Cuba, it could be some time before the doors are blown open; only Congress can remove the embargo, which Bernard doesn't envision happening in the near term. "Broadening trade in Cuba is going to be a longer process than anyone thought it would be," Bernard says, adding: "U.S. agriculture stands to gain a lot in Cuba."

**Crop Insurance**

Crop insurance faced scrutiny in 2015 and it won't be any different this year, according to Dillard. Bernard explains the program narrowly escaped death by budget cuts this year, and it's not over. "Be aware, crop insurance will be in the cross hairs again," Bernard says. "That seems to be the place most anti-subsidy folks are focusing their attention."

**Ethanol**

The Presidential election hasn't included many agricultural topics other than the Renewable Fuel Standard. "I think ethanol's probably been the one that's come up the most, and that focused really on Mr. [Ted] Cruz," Bernard says. "His statements (and) his positions were not very favorable." Bernard says that no matter who wins the Oval Office, RFS won't just disappear when its 2022 expiration date arrives. Congress would have to repeal the law.

**USDA**

While the race to the White House commands the most attention among the media and voters, farmers and ranchers probably will be most impacted by whoever is tapped for the top spot at USDA, according to Bernard. "What is their focus going to be?" he asks. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack has been on the job since 2009 and this year, he's expected to move onto a new role. Though he might not leave Washington, some analysts think he could be selected as Hilary Clinton's running mate, a possibility, according to Bernard. "You can't rule it out," he says. "Keep in mind that when Mr. Vilsack ran for president, when he pulled out of the race, he threw his support behind Hillary Clinton." It all depends on where the Clinton campaign thinks it needs support, according to Bernard, but he adds that having a person who understands agriculture in the No. 2 spot in Washington would be a "major plus for U.S. agriculture."

## Protecting

From page 3C

environment. They are capitalizing on those beliefs to attack the farm families that are out there doing a good job and following the regulations. We believe they deserve fairness."

To make sure rules are being followed, pork farmers in the state work with scientists and veterinarians to make sure the hogs are raised in a humane way.

"We know that all hog farms are permitted by the state and they follow requirements to protect the environment," Emory said. "They're inspected every year and they obtain comprehensive records on their waste management practices."

Some of the management includes using technology to monitor lagoons and the application of liquid fertilizer on crops.Emory added that the regulations in North Carolina are the most comprehensive of any state.

North Carolina's pork production is second in the nation, following behind Iowa. Currently, there's 8.9 million hogs in the state, which is slightly less than 14 percent of America's total inventory. More than 46,000 people in North Carolina are employed through hog production. According to NC Farm Families, the economic impact is $9 billion, with $2.5 billion billion going back to North Carolina's economy. Advocates believe the industry generates millions in tax revenue to several pots such as local schools, construction and infrastructure.

Although supporters of pork producers said the right thing is being done, the farmers have been criticized by activist groups such as the Waterkeeper Alliance, which is leading the way by placing billboards along the highways — displaying messages claiming the farmers are harming the environment.

"We know that's no true," Emory attested. "When people make baseless attacks against you, it really get folks riled up and excited. We knew that we had to do something."

Based in New York City, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. serves as the president for Waterkeeper Alliance's Board of Directors. Its purpose is to support organizations with similar interest of improving water quality throughout the world. The organizations spans across six continents with more than 200 organizations.

"They're saying that the hog farms kill fish and we know that's not true," Emory stressed.

To back up his point, Emory said one of North Carolina's cleanest streams, the Black River, runs through the middle of Sampson County. He said it has a high quality approved by environmental and natural resource officials.

"If what we're doing is not working, we know that a clean river would not be there with the number of farms we have in that area," he said.

In Maryland, the Waterkeeper Alliance challenged a family farm in Maryland, but a ruling went in favor of the farm, after a three-year battle regarding chicken waste. NC Farm Families wants to stop the same from occurring in North Carolina.

"That's is our mission — to stand up for hog farmers," Emory said. "We know how important it is to our local economy, especially Sampson County. If we did not have the pork industry and the poultry industry, in addition to other agriculture, we wouldn't have very much."

Johnson added that Sampson County has a long history of pork production with producers who are resilient when it comes to health issues.

"Health issues are always a challenge to anyone in livestock and poultry production," she said.

Courtesy photo

**NC Farm Families show support for hog farmers throughout the state.**

For this year, economists believe that a lot of hogs will be on the market which will have an impact on pork prices. Johnson believes farmers of all types will be impacted as well.

"You have to deal with elements and you have to deal with mother nature," she said. "What happens in the Midwest can impact our farms becuase we buy a lot of grain from the Midwest. There's a lot of different challenges out there. In some years, there's more than others."

Emory stressed that farming ties into other aspects of the community.

"Everything else is related, whether it's a grocery store or a pharmacy or an insurance business, it all trickles back to the driving force in our economy," Emory said.

North Carolina Farm Families is encouraging residents in the state to join their fight by visiting their website, www.ncfarmfamilies.com and signing their online petition. It was launched in July. At the beginning of October, NC Farm Families collected 12,000 signatures. It was presented to Gov. Pat McCrory with hundreds of hog farmers present. To increase awareness, NC Farm Families released advertisements which can be viewed on their website.

"We have more scheduled," Emory said about the media campaign which also includes a push in the radio, print publications and social media markets.

Emory said the organization will continue to get more farm families involved. Johnson shared the same sentiments.

"Having them speak up about what they do is power and will counter to the misinformation that's being spread by these groups," Johnson said.

Another goal is to educate people who are not farmers and helping them understand how important hog farmers are to our state and economy.

"...And they produce good food," Emory said.

Reach Chase Jordan at 910-249-4617. Follow us on Twitter at @SampsonInd and like us on Facebook.

# Boney

From page 1C

the farm with his older brother Carnett for their entire lives, operating farm equipment longer than some people are on this earth. They were forced to take care of the homestead at a young age, especially Carnett, when their father — Dick's grandfather Horace — passed when the boys were just 14 and 7 years old. The older brother, Carnett went straight to work with their mother Lois to feed the family. Howard helped out as much as he could, but was going to three-room Concord School off N.C. 24 at the time, ultimately able to finish school before being shipped overseas.

Like many family farms, the brothers live on the same road just a couple hundred yards away from each other in the vicinity of where the original family home used to be. Dick and Durwood's mother Lois lives between them, just across the street from the shop and storage area they own.

"He ran equipment until he was 90 years old," Boney, who is 66 himself, said of his father. "He was tougher than me or my brother."

Asked whether he sees that same prospect for himself, he gives a quick answer.

"No," he said with a wry delivery. "He was in better shape than I am. He was a tough knot. I'm already having aches and pains. He didn't. He went until he was 90 years old."

Howard would pass away just a couple years later. Carnett died in his late 80s, operating equipment right up until his death.

"He stayed busy all the time," Boney noted of his late uncle.

All told, the brothers spent about 150 years between them tending to the family farm. The only two boys of Horace and Lena Boney, "they just had to go to work" when Horace passed away.

"(Carnett) quit school right then and had to start farming. My grandmother and Carnett ran the farm. It was about 40 acres. It was like everybody else. They had a few animals, some row crops, I think they tried dewberries and a little produce — just a little bit of a lot of stuff," Boney remarked. "It was just harder work back then, everybody had to do a little bit."

"Their dad passed away when Howard was in grammar school," Lois said. "At that time, they used the plows for the row crops, and (the boys) didn't know how to do it. They were doing it on the wrong side."

Howard was able to finish school, working on the farm each afternoon, and went on to the Navy, fighting in World War II before coming back to the farm himself around 21 or 22 years old.

"It was tough when we got married," Lois said of she and Howard. "My baby girl Carol is close to 50 and she was a baby when we moved here. The old house sat up there where Dick lives and they moved it over on Five Bridge Road. He gave it to somebody and they moved it."

The work of those two brothers and what they learned in a short time from their father paved the way for the next generation of brothers, Lois' children, that now run it alongside their own kids. The farm is steeped in history, a storied past on which Boney often reflects.

"I talk about it all the time," he said, reciting a lesson he's learned from his father and uncle. "You need to get your tail out and go to work. Work, work, work. Don't sit around. There wasn't any sitting around. They didn't know how to sit around, hell I don't know how. They were raised that way. Some guys now just like to sit around a lot."

**"You need to get your tail out and go to work. Work, work, work. Don't sit around. There wasn't any sitting around. They didn't know how to sit around, hell I don't know how. They were raised that way. Some guys now just like to sit around a lot."**

**— Richard 'Dick' Boney**

He pondered mechanization and technology, which has probably factored into that. It is a necessary component of diversified farming that covers hundreds upon hundreds of acres of crops and includes large-scale animal operations. It also takes farming in a new direction, one that requires a little less elbow grease and manual labor, Boney attested.

"There is plenty of work to do that will get your hands dirty," he said, "but some of them don't like to get their hands dirty. There's more mechanization (these days). It's not work like we used to do work. There's technology."

He might not go until he's 90 like his father before him, but Dick Boney said being eligible for a Social Security check doesn't mean he makes himself ineligible for farmwork.

"I like running equipment. I'm a hands-on man," he said. "That's the way it's going to be ... I guess until I die."

Boney was about 23 when he came back to the family farm.

He studied agriculture at N.C. State University then went on to work at Tidewater Agricultural Research & Extension Center in Virginia. Garrett was in the Army, serving stints in Germany and more recently in Afghanistan, before going to Appalachian State University. He primarily oversees the turkey operation at this point.

"It's kinda sad," said Boney of seeing the farm passed down to another generation. "They've got a hard way to go. The way things are changing ... the farm economy is so bad. Farm economy is struggling. The world economy affects everything and grain prices are in the toilet right now. We'll hold on as long as we can, but we're in for a few tough years."

He knows full well the ebb and flow of farming, seeing a similarly down economy in the 1980s.

"Same kind of thing, of course I was younger then," Boney attested. "I guess it just goes in a cycle like anything else."

It's a tough job, the reason for so much diversification and the necessity of having a contract with large integrators. On the Boney farm, there are row crops, cattle, hogs and turkeys, not out of the ordinary for many farms now. In addition to the family members, there are two other full-time workers.

"With animals, there is just always something to do," said Boney.

And even with all the work to do, farming is always dependent on the weather. It gets sloppier for the animals and, depending on whether it is the growing season, excess rains can wipe out a crop. An operation has to be large to make money and outside factors, including increased regulations and weather, can still affect the bottom line.

"It just costs a ton of money to farm now. It's unreal what it costs, and that's for everybody," Boney said. "Even if you think you have extra money, something is going to come along and take it. That's just life."

Farming is really a labor of love — it simply has to be to succeed. And the most successful operations are family farms. They have to be.

"My daddy lived across the road, my uncle lived on this side of the road," Boney said, taking a brief respite at the shop on Bonnetsville Road, across the street from the wide expanse. "I built that house there and my brother lives right up the road. There are a lot of these types of farms around. A lot of them. You can't just jump out there and say 'hey I'm good at farming, and do it.'"

The farms are handed down, from generation to generation.

"Most farms around are family farms," Boney attested. "Some property has been inherited. You can't do it any other way.

"If you don't have a member of the family who wants to farm, they're going to fold up and sell," Boney said simply. "About all the farmers I know my age and younger, their folks started the thing. You need plenty of support from your family, like my daddy and my uncle — they supported us."

Boney's wife Patricia has also offered that support. The couple have another son Clay. Along with his brother Durwood, Boney also grew up with three sisters, Linda, Joan and Carol. He knows it takes a village. It also takes adapting and growing with the times.

Once a private hog operation, that was shut down close to three decades ago in favor of growing hogs with Prestage. Turkeys actually came in a couple years before the hogs, in the late 80s.

"It was either do that or get out," Boney said, noting the same was true about growing from a 40-acre plot of land. "(Howard and Carnett) probably put on another 400 percent, and me and my brother probably put on a couple hundred percent after that."

With more love, more years and work, work, work, the Boney operation will continue to adapt and expand, he said.

"With my daddy and my uncle, it was a good size farm. Then me and my brother added on some acres, but acres — good acres — are hard to come by with the price of land," Boney remarked. "It's going to grow a little. It's got to grow to supply everybody, and the people who work here. It's got to grow."

Reach Managing Editor Chris Berendt at 910-249-4616. Follow the paper on twitter @SampsonInd and like us on Facebook.

Chris Berendt | Sampson Independent

**Cattle get something to eat at Boney Farm, where there is also hogs and turkeys raised as part of a contract with Prestage Farms.**

Courtesy photo

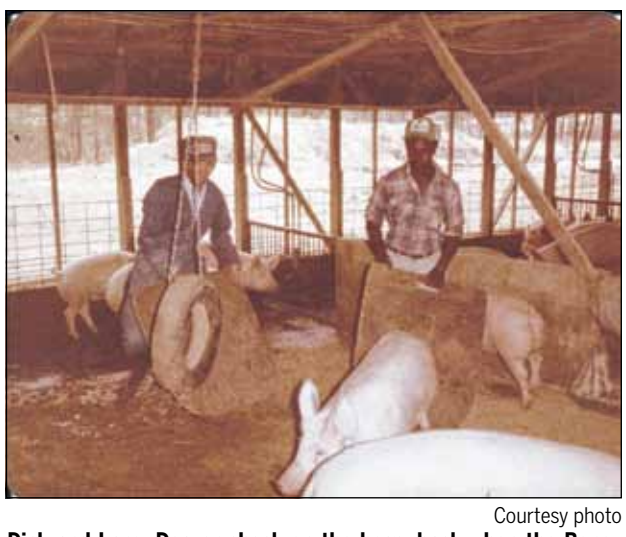
**The house where Howard and Lois Boney raised children Durwood, Dick, Carol, Linda and Joan.**

Courtesy photo

**Durwood and Dick lounge in their younger days.**

Courtesy photo

**Howard Boney poses for a picture with daughters Carol and Linda.**



Courtesy photo

**Dick and Larry Deaver check on the hogs, back when the Boney Farm was home to a private hog operation. It now contracts with Prestage Farms.**

Courtesy photo

**Old-fashioned hog killing on the farm.**

Chris Berendt | Sampson Independent

**There are some 30,000 turkeys raised at the Boney Farm.**

Courtesy photo

**Tabacco barns that still on the farm property to this day.**

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# 4-H information for youth interested in joining

**By Daniel Collins**
Sampson 4-H

The Hippity Hop Rabbit Club focuses on the study of rabbits.

**What is 4-H?**

It is common nature in knowing that you need roots to grow, but without that system of filtration, nurturing and structure, there can be no flourishing. Within a system comes effects that can lead to sustained amounts of productivity, the initiation of difference and an avenue of provided change.

When thinking about 4-H, we have a system that maintains one thing in its structure...YOUTH! When providing for the opportunities in positive youth development, 4-H is key to delivering hands-on, life skill knowledge experiences that are like no other program in the nation. Youth who participate in 4-H gain experience through project work, service learning, leadership, citizenship and healthy living.

As the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System of our land-grant universities (NC State and NC A&T State), 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization that empowers six million youth throughout the United States. Cooperative Extension provides the leadership to engage youth in 4-H in all counties in North Carolina. The impact of the Cooperative Extension partnership brings together the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of USDA, land grant universities and county government to source learning opportunities for youth.

4-H reaches all over North Carolina—from urban neighborhoods to suburban schoolyards to rural farming communities. With a network of more than youth, volunteers, professionals, and more alumni, 4-H helps shape youth to move our clubs, communities, country and the world forward.

**Shown Success**

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development was the first-ever research project of its kind. The decade-long study, completed by a team of researchers at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, Medford, MA, compiled a record of how 4-H impacts youth and adults working with those youth. The report shows that 4-H youth excel beyond their peers and are:

- Four times more likely to make contributions to their communities (Grades 7-12)
- Two times more likely to be civically active (Grades 8-12)
- Two times more likely to make healthier choices (Grade 7)
- Two times more likely to participate in Science, Engineering and Computer Technology programs during out-of-school time (Grades 10–12) and
- 4-H girls are two times more likely (Grade 10) and nearly three times more likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities.
- Source: www.4h.org

**4-H in Sampson County**

The evolution of a program is seen through avenues of change and innovation in today's society. We have many new methods of 4-H program delivery, new ideas on the horizon for club management and different techniques of knowledge experiences in the near future.

There are ten (10) program focus areas that 4-H covers. Within these 10 areas, all are highlighted in Sampson County programming through one or more avenues of program delivery:

- Animal Science/Livestock
- Citizenship
- Expressive & Communicative Arts
- Family Sciences
- Healthy Living
- Leadership and Personal Development
- Natural Resources and Entomology
- Environmental Education
- Plants, Soils, Gardening
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

Through current members, volunteers, alumni and former invested individuals, the road for success has been paved in Sampson County through a solid foundation of participation, rewards and accomplishments.

There have been many faces involved with 4-H in Sampson County for many years. Since the beginning of the 4-H program, there have been twelve (12) 4-H agents (educators who have a main program focus in youth development that could vary from livestock, school enrichment, leadership) to serve the youth and communities of Sampson County.

**Who is involved?**

In most recent years, enrollment for 4-H has served well over 2,000 youth in Sampson County that includes club involvement, livestock shows, school enrichment participation, summer workshops, 4-H camping and teen leadership opportunities.

Anyone who is between the ages of 5 and 18 by January of the current year may participate in 4-H programming. Sampson County offers programming for all ages throughout the year.

Currently we have opportunities that highlight our 4-H community clubs:

- Bull's Eye Club (livestock focus)
- Cookie Clover Scouts Club (partnership with Girl Scouts and service focus)
- Every Buddies Kidz Club (community focus)
- Happy Feet Club (community, culture focus)
- Hippity Hop Rabbit Club (rabbit focus)
- Majestic Riders Club (horse focus)
- Juntos (Hispanic youth focus)
- Teen Court (community service)
- Substance Abuse Prevention (youth prevention focus)
- Youth Inspire Group (skill building)
- Sampson County 4-H Teen Council (teen focus) and the
- Sampson County 4-H SPIN (Special Interest) Club (special topics).

Sampson County 4-H also offers programming with the Project Outreach 21st Century After School learning centers at Hargrove Elementary, Hobbton Elementary, Hobbton Middle and Midway Middle Schools.

Sampson County would not be able to do anything in our communities if it were not for our great volunteers and supporters. Without the support of the Sampson County Board of Commissioners, Sampson County Government, United Way of Sampson County, Prestage Farms, Smithfield Foods, South River Electric, Cape Fear Farm Credit, Sampson County Farm Bureau, Big Blue, The Sampson Independent, The Sampson Weekly, The Sampson Sun and many other sponsors and donors, 4-H programming would not be able to provide the variety of opportunities it does through livestock competitions, field trips and learning experiences here at the Sampson County Extension Center.

**What does the future hold?**

Sampson County 4-H has a vision of growing into the premier county program in North Carolina. Even though this will not take place overnight, steps toward developing new programming and clubs have already been put into place with the Sampson County 4-H Staff and 4-H Advisory Council. Some future programs in the planning stages are:

- SPIN (Special Interest) programs that highlight more interest from youth who are not currently enrolled in 4-H programming
- 4-H Talent Show
- Cloverbud After School programming at schools within the county/city service area
- Expanded programming with the Sampson County 4-H Teen Council
- Middle School 4-H Council
- Specialized summer programs in camping
- Shooting Sports/Education programs
- New projects and competitions that could include storytelling, extemporaneous speaking, song writing, etc.

**How can I get involved?**

Sampson County 4-H is always looking for ways to involve youth and for volunteers to assist with

See 4-H | 7C

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# Agricultural success through generations

**By Eileen Coite**
Ag Extension Director

Farming is certainly a business handed down through generations. Time and time again, I can think of situations where these two words are used simultaneously.

Coite

Which is a very good thing!

Success, and its link to generations, is evident in so many places. But in Sampson County, there is one business where these two words are so connected, and that would be farming. Agriculture is all around us, and in most instances, the strong bond and support of a family is molded into its success. And, since the local grocery store doesn't actually milk the cows, harvest the wheat or cure the ham...much to the surprise of many young children, we certainly need experienced farmers to pass on their management skills to the next generation.

That's exactly what WF Partnership in Newton Grove has done. Since the late 1800's, farming has been the foundation of this family for four generations. Today, George and Gerald Warren, along with their sons, Brian, Brandon, and Bartley, have kept the tradition alive. Sure, there have been ups and downs, as with any business. There have, and will be more tough years to come, but it's good to know your family has your back. According to Brian Warren, "Everyone shares in the benefits, successes, or the losses." Farming can certainly have its challenges, but "you can have confidence knowing something has been done right" when it comes to his family. WF Partnership farms field crops, such as cotton, soybeans, corn, tobacco, wheat, and sweet potatoes, along with hay, hogs and beef cattle. Having strengths and expertise in many different areas give them flexibility to divide and conquer well, but also help one another during critical times that require pulling together. That, and the "special bond, and opportunity to become a part of a successful, established business...with a vested interest" in decisions is what has been most rewarding to Bartley Warren. All the while knowing that there are "high expectations when family is involved". Many farmers don't have the same opportunities to pass their farm down. It's not for everyone, but for Gerald Warren, the ability to "leave a legacy" to his family makes it all worthwhile.

The same benefits hold true for Kyle Smith and his family, for their third generation operation in Harrells, started by his grandfather. According to Kyle, the most rewarding part of working with his father, Ronnie, and brother, Blake, is that they have family time together, daily, and like the Warrens, the security and flexibility to "fill in wherever needed" even though they each have their areas of strength. The Smiths also farm major commodities in Sampson; corn, soybeans, cotton, wheat, hay, turkeys, and hogs. However, they also help educate the public on farming, through Kyle's Farm, an agritourism business they built that, in Kyle's opinion, "is rewarding" as it "helps youth understand the importance of agriculture".

For Kris Hairr and her boys, farming has been a lifestyle that has had a positive impact on their family for years. Not having grown up on a farm, the NC swine industry and local companies have given employees like Kris a tremendous opportunity for a career in agriculture, which has in turn given her two sons, Braston and Sevin, similar opportunities. Each of them grew up visiting the sow farm she has managed for 21 years, learning about the hard work, dedication, and commitment that goes into farming each day, and they are now "advocates of the industry" according to Kris. There are other benefits too. The younger generations can reach a "wider circle of people", which for Kris, is "key to turning public perception (of farming) around".

All across the 600 thousand acres of Sampson County, you can find a farm family, growing, sharing, bonding, supporting, and creating a lifestyle to be proud of, and to pass on to the next generation. Certainly this is a true definition of success. Being able to "see others succeed" is what's been most rewarding for Kris Hairr, and I think many of us would agree — something that can be passed on for many generations to come.

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# 4-H

From page 6C

programming efforts, lead clubs and support with other aspects of the program. Should you wish to get your kids, grandkids, nephew, niece or neighbor's kids involved with 4-H here in Sampson County, please contact any of the Sampson County 4-H team. We would be happy to have you join our 4-H family as a member or volunteer!

- Daniel Collins, Extension Agent – 4-H Youth Development; daniel_collins@ncsu.edu
- Elizabeth Rowe, 4-H Program Assistant; elizabeth_rowe@ncsu.edu
- Danelle Graham, 4-H Program Assistant – Teen Court; danelle_graham@ncsu.edu
- Daysi Hurtado, 4-H Program Assistant – Juntos; daysi_hurtado@ncsu.edu
- Denise McIntyre, 4-H Program Assistant – Prevention & Youth Inspire; denise_mcintyre@ncsu.edu
- Cindy Nance, 4-H Secretary; cindy_nance@ncsu.edu
- Eileen Coite, Sampson County Extension Director; eileen_coite@ncsu.edu


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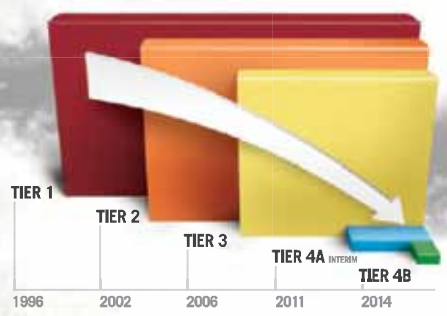

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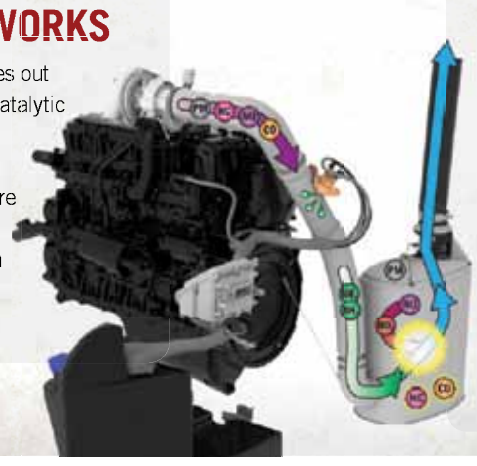

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