



CONLEY

Jerrie Conley: a woman always on the go

By EMILY ANDERSON
Special to The Press

Jerrie Conley lives in perpetual motion, enjoying volunteer work for the community. She started working at the age of 13. Her first job was at a grocery store. There, she delivered food to customers. When she got off work, she began picking cotton. She has not stopped working. From a very young age she learned the value of hard work. After retiring from teaching for 30 years, she injects the work ethic gained from this job into everything she does.

"I will do anything to help the community," Conley says. She works with Relay For Life and volunteers at We Care once each month. During the Christmas season she works at the Christmas Store there.

She prepares boxes with presents so that each child may enjoy the holidays. She is also a member of Pilot Club which is a national organization. This club, which traditionally was composed of women, now invites men.

"I knew it was a good cause. I felt good about it," she said.

She is also involved with Fortnightly, a group that gives books to the library.

Former students hug Conley whenever they see her. Even though she retired from teaching, she takes time to help teachers and students with whatever they need. She enjoys playing music with kindergarten students, believing that she can make a difference. She genuinely loves working and being around people. She still yearns to see students' eyes light up

when they learn to read. On the first day of school she was challenged to remember each student's name. She says, "It was a goal to know each name before the school day was over.

Conley employed skills learned from teaching to help with the housing authority. There she helped with homework, did arts and crafts, and took field trips. "I love working with people," Conley explains. Perhaps this is why she works with a fraternity, AGR. As resident of the AGR house, she acts much like a mother to the students.

She stays busy even in her free time, enjoying playing piano and sewing. She stays active with the church, singing for the choir. Slowing down doesn't seem to be an option for this dedicated woman.

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