

20,198 investigations in 2018

Contacts offered for child abuse reports

By Judith Brown
Staff Writer

Blue and silver pinwheels have been alerting residents that April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and last Friday evening in downtown Laurens, several people spoke about the problems facing the nation's children.

City of Laurens Police Chief Chrissie Cofield, Laurens County Sheriff Don Reynolds, Laurens Mayor Nathan Senn and Cheryl Fowler, the grandmother of Clinton toddler Brantley Smith who was killed last summer, all spoke on the sadness and broad-ranging impact of child abuse.

Cofield shared again on the subject to members of Laurens City Council this week, explaining that in Laurens County, hundreds of children are facing situations of neglect and abuse.

"We talked with Sheriff Reynolds and compiled cases to try and develop an estimate countywide, and it appears that there were 250 cases of child abuse or neglect in 2018 alone, and that includes the county and the cities of Laurens and Clinton," Cofield said.

She presented a resource proclaiming April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, which

explained there are 1.1 million children in South Carolina, and of that 1.1 million there were 20,198 investigations of child mistreatment in 2018.

Senn had referred to the toll child abuse takes on families in his comments last Friday evening when Laurens County First Steps partnered with the Laurens Police Department and the Laurens County Sheriff's Office.

"In this broken world all children do not receive the same love and care from their parents and families, because many parents never learned from their own caregivers what a safe, stable and loving household looks like," Senn said, explaining that the negative impacts go well beyond the family members involved.

"The Department of Social Services and the South Carolina Commission on Indigent Defense costs the state of South Carolina millions and millions of dollars, and despite that, we are still terribly short on resources," he said. "We desperately need more guardians and DSS caseworkers."

Senn said the biggest cost, however, is on the child and its family unit, he said.

At the Friday evening Candlelight Vigil, Fowler,



encouraged everyone to begin considering themselves as "mandatory reporters," those who are required by law to report concerns about child neglect or abuse. Brantley Smith's mother and her live-in boyfriend were charged in the child's murder.

The non-emergency dispatch number for Laurens County is 864-984-2523, which is open during business hours and allows the caller to be transferred to the person most suited to hear their concerns. To speak directly to a deputy, call the sheriff's office at 864-984-4967 or to make a report to DSS call 864-547-8079.

For an emergency, however, call 911.

Living history encampment to be held at Musgrove Mill

If you have ever been curious about how life was in South Carolina during the Revolutionary War or you are just looking for a fun way to spend a weekend then you need to come out to Musgrove Mill State Historic Site on the weekend of April 27 and 28 for our Annual Living History Encampment. There will be reenactors portraying both Patriot and Loyalist militiamen, British Regular and Provincial soldiers, Continental soldiers, and civilians representing a variety of backgrounds. Throughout both days there will be several historic weapons demonstrations, militia musters for children, historic craft demonstrations, and sutlers selling goods to the public. You will also be able to interact directly with all of the reenactors throughout the weekend, so feel free to ask them any questions

you might have about the Revolutionary War or about what you see. They will love to speak with you.

The Encampment will be on both Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The price of admission will be \$5 an adult and \$2 for children age 15 and younger.

Please bring bottled water, and prepare for the weather.

For more information please contact the park at



mgmillsp@scprt.com or 864-938-0100 or visit southcarolina-parks.com.

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GREENHOUSE SALE DATES:
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Use Gate 3 Entrance Behind New CHS For Greenhouse.
Ring the doorbell on the gate for assistance if someone is not at the greenhouse between classes or during lunch.

VETERANS APPRECIATION DAY

WED., APRIL 24 • 11 A.M. - 2 P.M.

GREENWOOD COUNTY VETERANS CENTER
106 MAIN STREET N. • GREENWOOD

IN APPRECIATION FOR THE SACRIFICES AND SERVICE, ALL VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

- BUSINESSES FROM GREENWOOD COUNTY WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE TO SHOW THEIR APPRECIATION TO VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS
- COLUMBIA VA REGIONAL OFFICE WILL BE ON HAND TO ASSIST VETERANS WITH CLAIMS AND APPEALS INFORMATION
- VALOR PROGRAM SPONSORED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL ALAN WILSON WILL BE ON HAND WITH LAWYERS TO PROVIDE FREE SERVICES FOR LEGAL ADVICE, BASIC WILL, LIVING WILL AND POWER OF ATTORNEY TO ALL VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS. FOR APPOINTMENTS CALL THE GREENWOOD CENTER AT 864-942-8530

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LOCAL PEOPLE. SERVING YOU.

Join us this year at Laurens Electric's 2019 Annual Meeting! Saturday, June 1

Laurens Electric's Main Office, 2254 Highway 14, Laurens, SC 29360

Registration & Voting for Board of Trustees
8:30-10:30 a.m.

Entertainment
9-10 a.m.

Early Bird Prize Drawing
10 a.m.

Business Meeting Begins
10:30 a.m.

Prize drawings will follow the business meeting.

Entertainment



The band has performed worldwide playing a mix of Motown and Top 40 Dance Songs combined with high-energy choreography!

Laurens Electric Cooperative

\$25

Electric Bill Credit



2 \$1,000 Scholarships

GIFTS & PRIZES

Registration Gifts
Each member who is present and registers at the Annual Meeting will receive a

- **\$25 Credit on their electric bill.**

(Limit one \$25 electric bill credit per membership)

Grand Prize

- **2014 Chevrolet 1500 Truck**

Grand Prize vehicle similar to the one pictured.

Early Bird Prize

- **YETI® Tundra Haul Portable Wheeled Cooler** that holds 45 cans

(Must be registered prior to 10 a.m.)

Just for High School Seniors

- **Two \$1,000 Scholarships**

Two \$1,000 scholarships will be given away to high school seniors whose parents, grandparents or guardians are members in attendance (student does not have to attend). The member at the annual meeting can register for the scholarship drawing on the student's behalf.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Registration cards for the Annual Meeting will be mailed by May 17. You should receive **one card** and will be given **one gift**, even if you have multiple accounts. Only members who register in person will receive a gift.

laurenslectric.com

1-800-942-3141

