



2018 LAURENS MASTER GARDENER GRADUATES — Pictured are, from left, Tammy Floyd, Karen Franks, Dale Satterfield, Miriam Walden, Don Walker, Dawn Rinne, Chris Sparkman, Tommy Johnson, Sharon Mack, and Bryan Smith, program coordinator. Not pictured: Renie Adair, Tim Rogers.

Laurens Master Gardener course offered

The Clemson University Extension Service will be offering a Master Gardener Program this Fall in Laurens County. The Program will be held once each week on Tuesday evenings from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and will last for 17 weeks. The purpose of this program is to provide horticultural training and information to area residents. Urban Tree Care, Turfgrass Management, Vegetable Gardening, Weed Identification and Control, and Annuals and Perennials are just a few of the many excellent classes provided in the course.

Graduates of the Master Gardener Program will volunteer a number of hours of service to the Laurens County Extension Program or community beautification projects. The first class will be held on Aug. 13, at 6 p.m. in the Laurens County Extension Building, which is located just off the Square at 219 West Laurens Street. The registration fee for the Master Gardener Program is \$300, which includes books, supplies, handouts, and other materials. Registration for the course will close on Aug. 6. We

require a minimum of 10 persons to hold the class, and the class will be limited to a maximum of 24 persons. If you have any questions or comments please contact Bryan Smith at 864-984-2514 ext. 112. The Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

Judge rules on Lewis defense motions

By John Clayton
Editor

A judge overseeing a criminal case against embattled Greenville County Sheriff Will Lewis has made his rulings on an attempt by Lewis’ attorney to quash the indictments. The preliminary hearing was held in front of retired Circuit Judge G. Thomas Cooper on June 17 at the Laurens County Judicial Complex at Hillcrest. The case against Lewis, which includes several indictments for misconduct in office and obstruction of justice, is to be tried in York County by the 16th Circuit Solicitor’s Office. Thomas denied the motion of defense attorney Rauch Wise to quash the obstruction of justice

charge, but did approve the motion to quash one of six counts of misconduct of office and one of six counts of misconduct of a public officer. Cooper’s ruling stated that both counts he ruled to quash were “duplicious” of the indictment charging Lewis with obstruction of justice. “We are in receipt of Judge G. Thomas Cooper’s order resolving the motions to quash filed by defense counsel in the pending case against William Lewis,” 16th Circuit Solicitor Kevin Bracket responded in a statement. “While the order quashes two of the pending counts against Mr. Lewis, all other charges remain pending. We will continue to work towards resolution of this matter in October and have no further comment at

this time. “It is important to remember that indictments are merely allegations and Mr. Lewis is presumed innocent until his guilt is established beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.” Lewis admitted to an extramarital affair with a former employee of the Greenville County Sheriff’s Department, Savannah Nabors. Nabors accused him of sexual assault during a 2017 business trip and received a reported \$250,000 settlement from Greenville County. Prosecutors have accused Lewis with using taxpayer money to fund the affair and using his position to capriciously advance or stymie the careers of other employees of the sheriff’s department.

Power:Ed launches a new education initiative in South Carolina

Power:Ed, started by South Carolina Student Loan Corp (SCSLC) to fund education initiatives in South Carolina, has been formally launched. Power:Ed Director Sara Fisher says that grants will be awarded to nonprofits, colleges and organizations that help South Carolina students succeed in school, their careers and life. Power:Ed will focus on helping high school and college students prepare for the next phase of life, whether it be securing a quality job, going to technical college or getting accepted to a four-year college. “We’re excited to invest in local education efforts that help our students become prepared for the workforce and improve South Carolina’s educational system. Additionally, we want to help create opportunities and eliminate educational barriers for all residents of South Carolina regardless of age, race, gender or economic status.” — Neil Grayson, SCSLC Board Member and Power:Ed Committee Chair South Carolina Student Loan Corporation established Power:Ed to give back to the community by investing in educational improvement programs in South Carolina. “At South Carolina Student Loan, we’ve seen how providing financial aid to students turns goals and dreams into realities. We’ve launched Power:Ed to extend our reach, because we believe education is the single greatest investment we can make in our students and our state’s future,” said South Carolina Student Loan CEO Trey Simon. “We’re excited for Power:Ed to begin touching students’ lives across the state.” Grant applications are now being accepted. Power:Ed grants must be used for the

benefit of South Carolina residents and students. Power:Ed also welcomes opportunities to work with like-minded funding partners

across the state to make a greater impact. If you’re interested in applying for a grant or partnering with us, visit power-ed.org.



SOMETIMES IT’S GOOD TO BE BELOW AVERAGE

Shaw to shutter Clinton plant

By John Clayton
Editor

Shaw Industries announced Monday that it will be closing its Clinton-based operation in late August. The hardwood-flooring factory, located on Torrington Road, will close on Aug. 24. About 120 employees are expected either to be relocated to one of the company’s other facilities or to lose their jobs. In a release from Shaw, company executives said the move to close the Clinton plant is being made to “most effectively meet customer needs.” Shaw will move production to other plants in the Southeast, according to the release. Laurens County Development Corporation Executive Director Jonathan Coleman said his agency is already working to find new opportunities for displaced Shaw workers. “As far as the county is concerned, we’re working hand in hand with the state to help these people,” Coleman said. “We’ve had several local employers reach out to us, and we’re putting together a job for those affected, so

we’re going to do everything we can to get those people transitioned to other jobs within the county.” Shaw, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, Inc. based in Dalton, Ga., bought Anderson Hardwoods in 2007. The company manufactures flooring materials, including carpeting, laminate and hardwood and operates some 40 plants primarily in the Southeast. “Supporting associates during this transition is our highest priority,” said senior director of human resources Mark Hartline in a statement. “As we realign our manufacturing operations, we will help associates identify new job opportunities at Shaw and in the region.” At the time of the sale to Shaw, Anderson employed around 500 people. According to news reports, that move came immediately after Shaw rival Mohawk Industries acquired four plants from another major hardwood flooring company. The closure of the Clinton plant comes two months after Shaw announced it will be shutting down another South Carolina facility in Central. Around 250 employees lost

their jobs following that closure. According to a 2015 statement by the company, Shaw then employed more than 1,500 people at seven plants across South Carolina. Coleman said the LCDC will work with Shaw employees on potential retraining for future careers as several new industries plan investments in the county. The large flooring plant, which is estimated at over 100,000 square feet, also gives the county another asset it can offer future industry investors, Coleman said. “We have a lot of people looking for employees, so I think we should be able to find plenty of opportunities to help those displaced workers,” he said.

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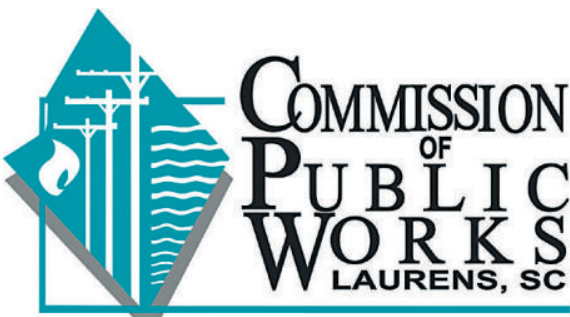
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