



Laurie C Lawson

December 2, 2017

Laurie Coke Lawson, 85, one of the State's leaders in agriculture, died Saturday, December 2, 2017.

Mr. Lawson was born in Darlington, S.C., December 4, 1931, the only child of the late Laurie Marvin Lawson and Betty Hemphill Lawson. He graduated from St. John's High School in Darlington in 1949 and from Clemson College in 1953 with a degree in agronomy. While at Clemson he played on the golf team.

After graduating from Clemson he joined the U.S. Army as a First Lieutenant and was an ammunition officer for the 69th Infantry Division, stationed at Fort Dix, N.J. and then at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland.

After returning to Darlington County to farm in 1955, he devoted his efforts both to the farm and to the community and statewide services. He owned and operated a diversified farming operation in Darlington County that included tobacco, cotton, corn, soybeans, sweet potatoes, wheat and turfgrass. He was a hands-on farmer who enjoyed and was successful in his business. He was a member and past president of the Darlington County Agricultural Society. He was a member and past president of the Darlington County Farm Bureau and was a former member of the Board of Directors of the S.C. Farm Bureau Federation, the S.C. Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company, and was a member of the S.C. Farm Bureau's Legislative Committee, among others. He was named the Darlington Junior Chamber of Commerce's "Outstanding Young Farmer" in 1962.

Mr. Lawson was appointed to the S.C. Agriculture Commission by Governor Riley in 1979 and again in 1983, and served as its Chairman for eight years. Afterwards he served four more years as a member from the Fourth Judicial Circuit. He was named one of the ten Outstanding Farmers in the U.S. by the American Cyanamid Corporation in 1982 and was named Progressive Farmer's Man of the Year in service to Agriculture in 1985. He was founder and a member of the S.C. Tobacco Association. Mr. Lawson was the recipient of the S.C. Farm Bureau's Distinguished Service Award in 1986 and was awarded the Order of the Palmetto by Governor Riley in 1987. He received an Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree from Clemson University in 1997 and the Clemson University Alumni Association's Distinguished Service Award in 1998. He was given an Honorary State FFA Degree in 1998 and an Honorary American FFA degree from the National FFA Organization in 2000. Mr. Lawson received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award from Clemson University and served for a time as the Assistant to the Vice President of Public Service and Agriculture for Clemson. In the spring of 2017, the lobby of the Clemson Extension Service in Florence was named in his honor.

Mr. Lawson was appointed State Executive Director of the S.C. Farm Service Agency of the USDA on the recommendation of the Senator Ernest F. Hollings in May of 1993 and served from 1993-2001 and again from 2009-2011 when he retired at age 80. His desire was always how he could best help the farmer who needed assistance and see government work for them.

Mr. Lawson was a member and past President of the Darlington Kiwanis Club. He was the Darlington Chamber of Commerce's Professional of the Year in 1976. He served as a Director and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Darlington C & S Bank, now Bank of America. He was a member and past Chairman of the Darlington County Development Board and was a member of past Chairman of the Darlington County Board of Education.

Mr. Lawson was a Christian Gentleman and was a faithful and devoted member of Trinity United Methodist Church in Darlington where he served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees for over 25 years. He was a past Lay

Leader of the Church, a member of the Council on Ministries and a former Chairman of the Administrative Board, served for many years as Chairman of the Building and Property Development Committee and as a Sunday School Teacher. As a Methodist he was a past member of and Chairman of the Board of Epworth Children's Home in Columbia.

On July 11, 1953 he married Elizabeth (Betty) Banks Pearce of Darlington, who died August 29, 2006. Surviving are his four children, all of Darlington: Marvin Irving Lawson (Brigette); Elizabeth Coke Lawson; William Edward Lawson (Laura) and James Hemphill Lawson (Lisa); ten grandchildren: T. Fields Norwood (Leah) of Florence; Laurie Gregg McBride (Brad) of Hartsville; Julia Lawson Taylor (Jay) of Greenville; Claire Hemphill Lawson of Charlotte; T. Lawson Gregg of Charlotte; Caroline Coke Lawson, Elizabeth Pearce Lawson and Mary Adair Lawson of Darlington; Kate Hemphill Lawson and James Laurie (Jay) Lawson of Darlington; and one great-grandchild, Lawson Clair Norwood of Florence. He is also survived by his sister in law, Mary Pearce Wells (John) of Seabrook Island, S.C.

Funeral services will be held at 3 o'clock on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at Trinity United Methodist Church, 126 Pearl Street, Darlington, S.C. 29532, and his former Pastor Timothy J. Rogers officiating.

The family will receive friends during the hours of 4-7 PM on Monday, December 4, 2017 and following the funeral service at the residence, 104 Tennessee Drive, Darlington, S.C.

Memorials may be made to Trinity United Methodist Church Building Fund, PO Box 16, Darlington, S.C. 29540.

Kistler-Hardee Funeral Home is in charge of all arrangements.

Tribute Wall

HG

“ *With deepest sympathy,*

Howard Godbold



Howard Godbold - December 06, 2017 at 06:31 PM

ED

“ *Marvin, Betty Coke, Family & Friends of Mr. Laurie Lawson, we were so sorry to learn of your loss. May GOD Grant You Grace. we "echo" & "Amen" all the nice things thought, written, & said about this Great man.. Like everyone else, Every experience with Mr. L L was encouraging & upliftingly positive.*
ed & carolyn davis, eugenia d vale

ed davis - December 06, 2017 at 04:02 PM

RN

“ *Mr. Laurie,*
A Country Gentleman in every since. I have never met a more kinder and thoughtful person. When tobacco was the money crop he always enjoyed talking with my Dad.
,as My Dad was a Goverment Grader as well a tobacco Farmer.
When we lost Dad he was so thoughtful to my Family.
I will always remember his grin and smile!
Gods Peace To The Family of Mr. Laurie!
Rex Norris

Rex Norris - December 05, 2017 at 04:53 PM

GO

“ Marvin and family, I am deeply sorry for your loss. Prayers up for all of you in the days ahead.

Grady L O'Neal - December 05, 2017 at 11:37 AM

LB

“ Laurie was one of the kindest men I have ever known. I grew up one street over from him and as a child I loved visiting him and sweet Betty. He actually wrote a letter to Clemson on my behalf when I was going through admissions that I truly believe helped me get in. Anytime I was back in town I tried to make it a point to stop by and see him. My mother, Carolyn Bryant, who also loved him dearly, always said Laurie was one of the founding members of my fan club! He was so encouraging and supportive of everything I did. He will be deeply missed by my mother and I. May he rest in peace and may all of his family find peace knowing he was now seen the face of God. Please receive my deepest condolences.
With my sympathy,
Laura Bryant

Laura Bryant - December 05, 2017 at 11:31 AM

DB

“ Des Standish Brown lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson



Des Standish Brown - December 05, 2017 at 10:56 AM

ML

“ *Mindy Lominick lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Mindy Lominick - December 05, 2017 at 10:10 AM

ML

He was one of the best men I have ever met and will be greatly missed. I enjoyed working with him at FSA and seeing him at the Farm Bureau conventions in Myrtle Beach.

Mindy Lominick - December 05, 2017 at 10:12 AM

HH

“ *Heather Howell lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Heather Howell - December 05, 2017 at 07:50 AM

LL

“ *Lori And Randy Lowe sent a virtual gift in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Lori and Randy Lowe - December 04, 2017 at 11:16 PM

LA

“ *Lawton Lynn Children - Gloria, Louis, Althea purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Laurie C Lawson.*



Lawton Lynn Children - Gloria, Louis, Althea - December 04, 2017 at 08:55 PM

DH

“ *Praying for your family during this sad time!
So sorry for your loss.*



Denise Hodge - December 04, 2017 at 08:45 PM

DF

“ *Dr. Louis Lynn and Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Laurie C Lawson.*



Dr. Louis Lynn and Family - December 04, 2017 at 08:39 PM

WL


“ *Marvin,
Just wanted you to know we are thinking of you and praying for you.*

William & Deborah Gandy Leslie - December 04, 2017 at 08:36 PM

BH

“ *My sincerest condolences to the Lawson family. Your Dad was such a gentleman each time I saw him. He was the epitome of a life well lived, such a kind soul. You are in my thoughts and prayers.*

Bobbie Huggins - December 04, 2017 at 07:19 PM


Carolyn
Collins

“ *Marvin, I am so sorry to learn of your Dad's passing. You and all your family are in my thoughts and prayers! Carolyn H. Collins*

Carolyn Collins - December 04, 2017 at 07:17 PM

NN

“ *What a blessing to have known such a Godly man who was so special.
Marvin, we love you and we are praying for you and your family.*

NANCY AND JIMMY NICHOLS - December 04, 2017 at 05:55 PM

CW

“ *Chris Wallace lit a candle in memory of Laurie
C Lawson*



Chris Wallace - December 04, 2017 at 04:16 PM

RH

“ *We were saddened to hear of Mr. Laurie passing. He was always such a pleasant person and could be the standard by which we live our lives. Our prayers are with the family.*

Ray and Pansy Howell - December 04, 2017 at 04:08 PM

DS

“ We are so sorry to read about Mr. Lawson, the last time we saw Marvin he said his Dad was not doing very good . Our prayers are with each of you and we will keep you close to our heart.



Danny and Phoebe Stokes - December 04, 2017 at 11:44 AM

DN

“ Marvin, Betty Coke, William, Jim and other members of the family:

When I think of your dad, I always think of him in his khaki shirt and pants with that gentle smile. I respected and admired him. Before our family moved from Darlington, I would run into him at the bank, grocery store or somewhere around town. He was always respectful and kind. Sometimes I would pass him going to or from the farm. As he aged, his shuffling of his feet reminded me so much of your Grandmother Lawson. He had so many accomplishments but I will also remember him for his faith, dedication, and kindness that was exemplified in his smile and actions. John and I will keep your family in our prayers as you go through your grief and loss.

*Dale Nolan
Easley, South Carolina*

Dale Nolan - December 04, 2017 at 11:20 AM

VJ

“ Vicki Jordan lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson



Vicki Jordan - December 04, 2017 at 10:49 AM

BF

“ *Bitsey Fickling lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Bitsey Fickling - December 04, 2017 at 09:13 AM

 Nancy Poston

“ *Nancy Poston lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Nancy Poston - December 04, 2017 at 08:52 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Laurie C Lawson.*



December 04, 2017 at 08:51 AM

AS

“ *He was one of the true supporters of my career in agriculture. He will be greatly missed.*



A. Salters - December 04, 2017 at 08:48 AM

WT

“ Wanda Turbeville lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson



Wanda Turbeville - December 04, 2017 at 08:41 AM

LM

“ He never had an unkind word to say about anyone. Knowing him made people want to be better. He will be sorely missed.



Lynn McElmurray - December 04, 2017 at 08:38 AM

RB

“ Renee Boykin lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson



Renee Boykin - December 04, 2017 at 08:29 AM

JS

“ Judy Sandifer lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson



Judy Sandifer - December 04, 2017 at 08:22 AM



Thomas
Dobbins

“ *Mr. Lawson was a true mentor to me as I navigated my career at Clemson University. He loved Clemson 's College of Agriculture an the people that work for CAFLS. He also loved the Pee Dee and his famous saying the "Agriculture is the Pearl of the Pee Dee". Mr. Lawson you are the Pearl of the Pee Dee and your legacy will live on through your family and the many others you had such a positive influence over. We will miss you but we will never forget you.*

Tom Dobbins

Thomas Dobbins - December 04, 2017 at 07:58 AM

DK

“ *My thoughts are with you.*
David Kistler

David Kistler - December 04, 2017 at 03:08 AM

RC

“ *Ruth Campbell lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



ruth campbell - December 03, 2017 at 09:27 PM

MA

“ *Myra Anderson lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Myra Anderson - December 03, 2017 at 09:19 PM

DS

“ *Mr. Lawson. A dear friend. We were on the Clemson University Agricultural Alumni board together and representing Darlington County. He is and will forever be a true friend, passionate Tiger, guiding force in Agriculture, and family man. He would always hug me and ask about the family when we would see each other. His grace and professionalism beamed through his smile. I am beyond tears and have and ran out of tissues. I pray for his family and that God will forever surround them with peace, comfort and Love. The Lord received a forever Loved Clemson Tiger. Hugs and Love from the King/Shea Family from Society Hill, SC and Wilmington, NC*

Dr. Amanda King Shea - December 03, 2017 at 09:01 PM

PB

“ *Pat And Moon Bazen lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Pat and Moon Bazen - December 03, 2017 at 08:08 PM

OL

“ *To the Lawson Family,
My prayers are with you following the loss of your father, a great Christian and Southern gentleman. Mr. Lawson never met a stranger and showed Christian love to all. I pray that you find comfort through your faith, love and support from friends, and your many fond memories. He lives on in Heaven and through you.*

*Oby Lyles
Greenville, SC*

Oby Lyles - December 03, 2017 at 07:37 PM



“ *Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Laurie C Lawson.*



December 03, 2017 at 12:50 PM



“ *Tobie Reynolds sent a virtual gift in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Tobie Reynolds - December 03, 2017 at 11:52 AM



“ *One of the nicest and most honest person I have ever met. I did so many interviews with him for television over a 30 year period pertaining to agriculture. No matter how busy he was he would always take time to do an interview with me. He will be remembered and he will be missed. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family for their loss.*

Cecil Chandler - December 03, 2017 at 10:27 AM



“ *So sorry for your loss. He is so special to us we will miss him very much. Thinking of all the family.*
Donna & Mitch Mims

donna mims - December 03, 2017 at 10:04 AM

EA

“ *Honestly one of the finest man I've ever known. Always had a smile on his face and kind words to follow. The family will be in my thoughts and prayers. Eddie Adams*

Eddie Adams - December 03, 2017 at 09:32 AM

ES

“ *One of the kindest, most gentle and respectful men I have ever known in my life He always had a smile. Will greatly be missed. My love and prayers go out to the family and friends.*

Eddie Sansbury

Eddie Sansbury - December 03, 2017 at 09:22 AM

RK

“ *Richard And Sue Kelley lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Richard and Sue Kelley - December 03, 2017 at 08:27 AM

RK

Sorry to hear about Mr. Lawson. Was a fine man. Prayers for the family.

Richard and Sue Kelley - December 03, 2017 at 08:28 AM

PR

“ *Pamela Reynolds lit a candle in memory of Laurie C Lawson*



Pamela Reynolds - December 03, 2017 at 01:41 AM



“ *I am so sorry for you lost. Yes,he will be missed. He was always so kind and such a gentleman. He always spoke to me whenever he saw me. It had probably been 20 years or more since he saw me last and a few years ago, he was in Harris Teeter and he saw me and said, "Hi Miss Tadlock. How have you been?" Then proceeded to talk about Daddy and remembering all of us when we were Children and about how he loved sitting at the store with Daddy and just talking.*

I will have all of you in my prayers.

Tammy Sue Windham - December 02, 2017 at 09:00 PM

JW

I dont believe I have ever met a man that was more encouraging, appreciative and just down right nice as Mr Lawson. Over the years he would seek me out to thank me for service to the community. My heart goes out to his family as I know he will be missed by all. Jimmy White

Jimmy White - December 03, 2017 at 05:26 PM

FS

Laurie always had very positive and kind words to say about my dad Toye Stewart Sr. and he would always ask about my wife Judy and brag about what a great job she did at the bank for him when she was working there. Marvin, Elizabeth Coke, William & Jim, we send you our deepest sympathy for the loss of your dad.

Franklin & Judy Stewart

Franklin Stewart - December 04, 2017 at 01:10 PM

FF

I want to extend my deepest sympathy to the Lawson Family. Mr Laurie was a true Southern Gentleman. He was a role model on so many levels. He was an ever faithful friend . My Dad would often say " there is no greater friend than Laurie Lawson." Mr. Laurie was always so good to regularly visit both Mama and Daddy. Both he and Ms. Betty were dear friend of my Parents and especially supportive after Mama's head injury and long recovery. To the very end , Mr Laurie would come check on my Dad often bringing Mr Cecil Ward and Mr Bill Bristow with him . I will always be appreciative to Mr Laurie and thankful for the friendship , love and concern that he extended to my parents. I am apprecitive of the ongoing Lawson / Flowers Family friendship. God Bless -- Frank M. Flowers , Jr.

frank flowers - December 04, 2017 at 08:59 PM

KL

Betty Coke, Laura, and the rest of the family,

I am sorry for your loss. I hope your wonderful memories will help ease your grief. My thoughts are with you.

Karen Lamonds

K. Lamonds - December 05, 2017 at 08:25 PM

DR

Wonderful man who possessed bottomless reserves of patience and kindness. It would take a very long time to describe the many ways in which he made the world a better place.

David Rudd

David Rudd - December 06, 2017 at 07:13 PM