

Features



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The 2025 Puxico Hall of Fame Induction was held on Friday, January 24th with a full gym in attendance of a cancelled game. The game between the Bernie Mules and Puxico Indians had to be cancelled due to illness in the Bernie School District. However Puxico always has a plan and scrimmage was held between the Black Shirts and the Orange Shirts to give the audience an opportunity to see the boys shine. It

It was also Homecoming Night. It was the perfect night because Puxico won!!

Cindy Crabb, Superintendant welcomed everyone to the 6th Annual Puxico Hall of Fame Banquet. She introduced the board members, Chad Payne, Steve Crisel, Randy Stephens, Michael Club, April Burchard, Joe Hodges, and Brad Watkins.

“We greatly appreciate their support like these to celebrate past and present success in our district,” stated Crabb. “We want to take a moment thank each of them for their service to our school community, the students and the staff.

Next Mrs. Crabb introduced some members of the district’s leadership team. Each stood to be recognized: Tracy Robison, special education director and Puxico Alumni, Erin Armstrong, instructional coach, Jessica Thurston, elementary principal, Todd Jenkins, junior high principal, Jordan Ellsworth, high school principal, and Bryant Ferneti, athletic director and boys head basketball coach.

“Thank you for coming, and please reach out to a member of the leadership team, our board members and it is an honor to welcome you back to the Puxico R-8 School,” commented Crabb.

The Puxico Hall of Fame Selection Committee is made up of seven people. They are the superintendent, high school principal, athletic director, a representative of the Puxico Athletic Booster Club, two representatives from the Puxico School Board and a community member.

There are three areas in which nominations can be made. They are Athletics, Academics, and Meritorious Service. Additional information can be found on the Puxico School’s Website if you have someone that you would like to nominate for future consideration.

“This year, as in years past, special consideration was given to each nomination, and we look forward to this tradition of inducing worthy members for many years to come,” commented Bryant Ferneti, athletic director. “Having that said, it is my honor to recognize this year’s inductees for his athletic and meritorious contributions, Mr. Ronnal Clinton.

Here are just some of his accomplishments:

Jr. High head boys basketball coach 1986-1995

During that time he earned seven 1st Place SCAA Jr. High Tournament Championships and four 2nd Place finishes.

High School Boys Basketball Asst. Coach 1985-1995

Helped lead the 1989-90 team to numerous accomplishments.

Jr. High Girls Basketball Head Coach 1992-1999

High School Girls Basketball Head Coach 1994-1999

High School Boys Baseball Head Coach 1986-1992

High School Boys Baseball Asst. Coach 1993-1992

Jr. High and High School Boys Basketball Coach 2018-2019

Mr. Ronnal Clinton was introduced and began his acceptance speech with, "As I contemplated about what to say tonight for the past several days, thinking about a lifetime of circumstances and events, the good along with bad, what keeps filling my mind was the sovereignty of God and how He accomplishes in people's lives!"

"So how could I stand up here tonight and not mention Him. To do so would be to shame Him. Jesus said whoever is ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of them before My Father in Heaven. So that not going to happen tonight. So if this offends anyone its not ment too. It's meant to give honor to whom honor is due and that's not me. I have titled my speech, "The Ultimate Trophy"

Here is a rendition of his acceptance speech:

"Last month the varsity basketball team brought home a large trophy, given because they were the VICTORS. That is not the ultimate trophy. I hope they have aspirations of something higher. For if you never aspire to be the best, then you will never be the best. It is not only what you do, it is how well you do it."

Likewise, over in the lobby of the Arnold Ryan Gym are two large state Championship trophies, given for the same reason. They were the VICTORS. Remember that word, but again that was not the ultimate trophy!"

"So what is? To answer that you have to understand life. What its purpose?" Well, life is a mixture of circumstances. A few you make yourself, many others are made for you, some re good, some not so good. So in this short journey called life, with all of its circumstances, you must fin, discover, figure out, the purpose of life."

Scripture tells us that all things work together, the past, the present and the future. It also tells us, "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord." Well I'm now an old man and on the last swing of life and I concluded a long time ago the true purpose of life is to bring the Glory to God, Ron Clinton."

So here briefly is my story that applies to tonight. In high school circumstances kept me from doing what I really wanted to do, as a result I placed blame. And I'll leave it at that, circumstances of life!"

“Well after high school, I got to take an all expense paid trip to the jungles of Vietnam. I didn’t understand those plans at all, at the time. Take hindsight, as bad as it was, I did come home. A two year circumstance of life taught me a lot, changed me and I had a different outlook on life.”

“After Vietnam, Carol and I dated, we married and Carol started her teaching career at Zalma. I promptly started college the Army made college possible for me, another circumstance that was otherwise not possible.”

“I graduated from Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) in Cape Girardeau in 1975 with a B.S. in Education, major Physical Education. There were no jobs available. At the time, no school wanted to hire a P.E. Teacher that could not coach. So I went back into carpentry at \$1.25 per hour. I probably built 40 homes around here. I relied on subbing in the winter months, circumstances of life. Life’s education.”

“I wonder why God didn’t make us with a rearview mirror? Or did He? It’s called hindsight. If you never use your rearview mirror you will get plowed over by the circumstances of life.”

“So here I was stuck, a college degree, no teaching job, and yet in that 10 year period God was shaping me for something better. He taught me dependence on Him, gave me patience, waiting on Him, learning to trust Him, trust His timing. Doesn’t the scripture tell us, there is a time for everything, a time to be born and a die, a time to be happy and a time to mourn, boy that’s a tough one, maybe even a time to teach and a time not to teach.”

“Then one day out of the blue the basketball coach and P.E. Teacher resigned just days before the start of the 85-86 school year. At the time I was building a home over at the Lake and up drove Pete Townsend, high school principal. We also went to church together and I did some extended subbing for him at the high school. So he knew I had a college degree in physical education.”

“I got down off the roof to see what he wanted. He said, “Ron, I need a PE teacher for the coming year, would you be interested?” I said, “I might, let me talk to Carol and I’ll get back to you.” Then Tom said, “You will do PE and I’ll do the coaching, only for 1 year and you can help me.”

I will never forget what Carol's advice was, "Ron, God has opened a door for you, you better go thru it." What a Godly wife. So I did. Was it being in the right place at the right time. Sure was, it was a circumstance of life. Most definately! Was it God's plan at the proper time? Well God knows. But I did learn this. When God opens a door go thru it. So I came on board to do P.E. and assist Pete at coaching basketball for only one year."

"The next spring they brought a retiree on board, Doc Dunn, to coach high school basketball, so I got to stay on to teach P.E. and assist Doc. But here is the kicker!! They assigned Jr. High Boys Basketball and High School Baseball to me, go figure, Coach Payton had an undefeated team in Jr. High and it didn't make sense, at the time, takes hindsight."

"Well Doc coached those boys three years and I got to assist him while coaching Jr. High Boys Basketball and High School Baseball. I learned a lot."

They brought Pete Townsend back to coach in 1989. Clinton went on to assist high school and head coach for Junior High Boys Basketball The Puxico basketball program had some great records those years and even some Bloomfield Christmas

Tournament records. Then Jim Davis was hired to teach science and coach high school basketball and baseball. So Clinton got to assist him while coaching Jr. High boys and girls basketball.

Clinton never asked for a coaching job, but ended up coaching 10 season of Jr. High Boys Basketball. Here are some accolades during his career:

7 SCAA Championships (only 2 since)

4 Second Place SCAA Tournament finishes

2 Teams won back to back championships

1 Team went 27-0 Last Undefeated Team in any sport at Puxico

10 Seasons Asst. High School Basketball Coach

6 Seasons Baseball Coach

6 Seasons Assistant Baseball Coach

Several seasons Jr. High Girls Basketball Coach

5 Seasons High School Girls Basketball Coach. Went from zero wins for ten years to winning 10 games in one season with 6 players

Had the first 1,000 point career player.

Put that all together that's a lot of practices, games, bus rides, hours, seasons overlapped, wore a lot of different hats, over worked, so when they came and asked if Shawn Hazel could take over Jr. High Boys Basketball, I said yes. I moved to teaching Jr. High Social Studies where I finished my teaching career, from just one year to 23 years, 15 years total coaching."

"Well I'm the least qualified to be the recipient of this honor. Any success I had it was because of others who helped me along the way. Booster basketball kept the players coming. Dennis Dublin and Roger Brown, 26 years of coaching, Booster Clubb, and AAU Basketball. They should be in the Hall of Fame.

Clinton gave credit to Pete Townsend for starting his teaching career at Puxico, Doc Dunn taught him about the game of basketball along with the boys, and Jim Davis.

"I didn't have an inkling of the knowledge he has of both sports. He helped me from day one and taught me so much. Thank you Jim Davis!"

"Most of all, all credit goes to the Sovereign Lord Jesus, who made it all possible thru the circumstances of life. Put your trust in Him. He will never fail you. Remember I placed blame long ago, well God turned that all around thru the circumstances of life, allowed little ole me to feebly attempt to coach the game I fell in love with!"

Congratulations Mr. Clinton. A well deserved honor!

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