

## CLARA JACKSON

Organized sports programs could never exist without advocates who provide both tangible and intangible assistance to those who are involved as coaches or players. One person who personifies the behind-the-scenes and on-the-sidelines supporter is Clara Jackson, retired teacher from the Amherst County School System. Although her professional résumé may indicate that she taught General Science, Biology, and Chemistry to high school students, she also provided enormous support for the sports programs.



A native of Texas, Clara Jackson came to Central Virginia in the late 1950s as a teacher at Central High School, Amherst County's consolidated high school for black students. She was among the first teachers from that school to move to a teaching position at the formerly all-white Amherst County High School in the late 1960s, when integration of schools was being implemented.

A graduate of Texas Southern University, she later completed a master's degree from Lynchburg College.

In the early days at Central High School, Clara sponsored the cheerleaders, chaperoned teams and cheerleaders at away games, served as basketball scorekeeper, and even provided transportation for them on many occasions.

Over the years, she has attended hundreds of games, both home and away, and has assumed every possible responsibility from selling tickets to working the concession stand. Beyond these areas of support, she would also be the number one cheerleader for the players. She knew them, she took a keen interest in them, she tutored them, and she guided them with a personal involvement in their lives. Through good times and bad, Amherst teams could be sure of at least one proud and faithful Lancer who would see them play, who would know the outcome and ramifications of the game, and who would give them whatever boost they might need for the next encounter.

Throughout her teaching career and in retirement, she held many positions of leadership in both the field of education and in other areas of community involvement.

Clara Belle Jackson – November 19, 1930

### Career highlights

- Virginia State Teacher of the Year – finalist
- NCCJ Humanitarian Award
- YMCA Black Achievers Award
- NAACP Freedom Fighter Award
- MCV Governors School Award
- City of Lynchburg Community Service Award
- Outstanding Conservation Educator
- Tandy Technology Scholars