

A Mailbox Fit for a Lineman

It took more than two years for Rod Mabry, a retired warehouse coordinator at Pee Dee Electric in Wadesboro to realize his vision of converting an old electric transformer into a one-of-a-kind mailbox. Mabry can't point to the exact source of his inspiration, but it's likely that he wanted a reminder of his years working as a Pee Dee Electric lineman and right-of-way foreman in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1985, a near fatal car accident left him unable to climb poles.

"If you get something in your blood," it's hard to deny it, said Mabry. "I'll always be a lineman at heart. I liked working outside and the challenge, danger and excitement of it."

For about two years, the transformer, an outdated model that came from a manufacturer friend of Mabry's, sat in his carport. However, others knew about the plan. "I told Rod, 'I'd be glad to finish it off for you,'" said Steve Preslar, a Pee Dee Electric lineman, a friend of Mabry's and an expert welder. "I said, 'I promise you that you won't see another one like it.'"

Preslar and three other friends spent about two days turning the hulking transformer into a functioning mailbox for Mabry's home. "I had to think about it," said Preslar. "It was a lot of prep work, but once I got the material, it didn't take long. I asked the transformer company, and it sent the original paint. I sanded it, primed it and painted it, and then cut it down about 14 to 16 inches."

Attached to the transformer's side is a square metal box, with a lid, to hold mail. The finishing touch is a little red flag to indicate pickup to the letter carrier, "who loves it," said Mabry.

There's a bittersweet element in this story. Last April, Mabry, 63, was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, for which there is no cure. When he can, he visits his buddies at Pee Dee Electric to hang out.

The mailbox, an impressive piece of workmanship, has gathered comments from far and wide, said Mabry. But, above all, he's happy with it," said Preslar. "And we accomplished that." *Courtesy Victoria A. Rocha and www.ect.coop*

AMS Wrestlers Win The Anson Middle School wrestling squad won 1st place at Long Middle School in Cheraw on Saturday, January 5. The following wrestlers were named Wrestlers of the Week after going 5-0: Juanwa Byrd, Caderris Thomas, Joshua Thompson, Nick Leak and Rayvon Kirkland. Honorable Mention Wesley Cook 4-1, Brad Hildreth 4-1, Wesley Hatcher 4-1, Jaylin Powe 4-1, Marquaves Ratliff and Joseph Powell 3-2. Match Results: Anson vs Lake City S.C. 72-29 won; Anson vs Hartville S.C. 78-24 won; Anson vs Buford 72-30 won; Anson vs North Central 54-45 won; Anson vs Long Middle 48-42 won. *By Mel Lyon*

Overwhelming Response to Upcoming Barn Blast Fundraiser

In a release from the Anson County Partnership for Children: The seventh annual Barn Blast has received an overwhelming response from the community and the Anson County Partnership is saying THANK YOU! Support has come in the form of sponsorships, ticket sales and auction donations, as well as countless hours of service from the many volunteers working so hard to make this year's Barn Blast a success. The Anson County Partnership for Children would like to thank presenting sponsors Anson Bank and Trust, and Poisson Law for their support of the Barn Blast; and Union County Community Action, presenting sponsor of the Champions for Children reception.

Donations for the auctions have been rolling in. The Partnership would like to extend its appreciation to all those businesses, individuals and corporations that have provided auction items including John Crider of Crider Properties; Jack and Lois Crumpler; Nancy Cornwell of Sullivan Place B&B; Wadesboro Chiropractic; Bert and Martha Finchum; the Polkton Police Department; the Inn of the Patriots; James Shipley of National Amateur Sports; and James Price of Price's Place Pottery & Antiques.

The Barn Blast will take place on Friday, January 25, from 6 to 11 p.m. at SPCC's Lockhart-Taylor Center. It is a western-themed event that includes dinner, an open bar of beer and wine, music, silent and live auctions, and lots of dancing and fun. Tickets for the Barn Blast are now sold out; however, anyone interested in attending who does not yet have a ticket is encouraged to call the Partnership of offices to be placed on a waiting list.

Tickets are still available to the Champions for Children Reception prior to Barn Blast on January 25, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the Olde Mill Gallery, honoring local Champions for Children finalists: HOLLA!, Gail Litaker, Charles Riddle and Vancine Sturdivant. Tickets for the Champions for Children Reception are \$60 per person and include wine, heavy hors d'oeuvres, live music and poetry reading by Joseph Bathanti, Poet Laureate of North Carolina. \$60 Reception tickets do not include entrance to the Barn Blast.

Proceeds from the 2013 Barn Blast will be used to support the work of the Anson County Partnership for Children including the following children's literacy activities: Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, MotherRead, Raising a Reader Book Bag Program, Reach Out and Read and local book distributions.

The Anson County Partnership for Children is a non-profit public/private organization which was formed in 1996 in response to the North Carolina Smart Start initiative. The Partnership is responsible for developing collaborative strategies to meet the unique needs of children and families in Anson County focusing on: Child Care Quality, Accessibility and Affordability, Child Health, Literacy and Family Support Programs. For more information, contact Ashley Haynes at 704-694-4036.

ACDVC BBQ FUNDRAISER

**Friday
Jan 18th
10am-6pm**

First Presbyterian Church • Wadesboro
208 South Greene Street

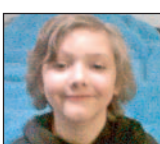
*Anson County Domestic Violence Coalition
and their many generous sponsors are
having their annual BBQ to raise funds for
ACDVC and to promote community awareness
against Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault.*

**Plates Include: Chopped BBQ, Slaw,
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Plate \$8 • Sandwich \$3 • BBQ Quart Bag \$10
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BENEFIT FOR CHRISTIAN RATLIFF



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11am until...**

At Anson Rescue Squad in Wadesboro

\$8 a plate, includes spaghetti, slaw, roll,
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All proceeds will go towards medical expenses

Christian is 8 years old. He had a liver transplant on November 17, 2012. He is the son of Damien Ratliff & Lauren Hardison. His grandparents are Anthony & Patty Ratliff and Bill & Selene Hardison. Great-grandparents are Annie Ratliff and the late Floyd Ratliff, Faye Gathings and the late Monroe Gathings, Mac & Betty Hardison, Spencer & Margaret Lowe, all of Wadesboro.

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We are pleased to offer this 80 page book containing nearly 200 Remembering columns by Ed McBride that were published in The Express Newspaper.

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By Ed McBride



A Collection of Columns

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NOTICE

\$300 CASH REWARD offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons involved in the breaking and entering the large red storage building located beside Anson High School & across the highway from Feed My Lambs Ministries on Hwy 74, Wadesboro. Call Eric @ 704-694-8400.

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