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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wadesboro.

Area Sign Painter and Express Columnist Ed McBride is the Featured Guest at Library Event



Ed McBride

The Hampton B. Allen Library's Brown Bag Book Club meets on Monday, February 19 at 12:00 noon in the Pritchett room with longtime sign painter and columnist Ed McBride as the guest of honor. The event will feature the 80 page book containing nearly 200 *Remembering* columns by Ed McBride that were published in The Express Newspaper. The book

was presented to Ed for his 90th birthday on August 10, 2012 by Express Publisher Allen Lyon. Several copies will be presented to the library. Everyone is invited to come, bring a covered dish and honor a wonderful man who has meant so much to Anson County and surrounding counties. For any questions please call 704-694-5177.

SPCC Receives \$500,000 Gift from James R. and Bronnie L. Braswell Trust

The James R. and Bronnie L. Braswell Charitable Trust, under the direction of George C. Bower, Jr., has awarded South Piedmont Community College a \$500,000 gift to purchase equipment and support technological infrastructure on its campuses.

"We are grateful for the Braswell Trust's ongoing generous support of South Piedmont Community College and for the confidence that has been placed in us to honor Mr. and Mrs. Braswell through that support," said Julie Sikes, SPCC's Vice President of Institutional Advancement. "Their legacy and passion for education carries on through the many students who have served as Braswell Ambassadors and New Century Scholars, and through the students who have benefited from the workforce-relevant, advanced equipment purchased through Braswell funds in support of our programs."

South Piedmont Community College continues to work toward providing new and upgraded facilities to meet current and future workforce needs in Anson and Union counties. Although the college's successful bond initiative will provide funding to upgrade and construct new brick-and-mortar facilities in Union County, the funds do not cover the costs associated with the necessary equipment and technological infrastructure for the projects. The Braswell grant, which will be made over a two-year period, represents a huge boost to those efforts.

SPCC has enjoyed a long relationship with the Braswell Trust. In 2000 the Braswell Scholarship, which has evolved into today's Braswell Ambassadors Program at the college, was created through the Trust's generosity.

James Braswell was a bank president, a farmer, and a former chairman of the Union County Board of Commissioners, and his wife Bronnie was a school teacher. Both were active members of Wingate United Methodist Church. The Braswells are now deceased, but their generosity continues to enrich the lives of those in their community and well beyond.

High School Selection Events in March

There will be a Parent Forum for high school selection 2018 on Tuesday, March 6 at 6:00 p.m. at Anson Middle School.

There will be an Open House for high school selection 2018 on Thursday, March 8 at the following schools:

- Anson Academy, 4 to 7 p.m.
- Anson Early College, 4 to 7 p.m.
- Anson High School, 4 to 7 p.m.

Healthy Lifestyle Cooking Seminar Sunday

"We've got a fat-busting and disease-elimination plan for you!" exclaimed Pastor Cary Rodgers of Pathway to Peace Ministries. "Learn how to live an abundant life without diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis, high cholesterol and high blood pressure! Come learn more at the next healthy living and plant-based cooking classes at Pathway to Peace Ministries."

The next class will be held this Sunday, February 18, from 3 to 5 p.m. The cost? Free! You will also taste and eat the food demonstrated. Invite family and friends to attend with you.

Pathway to Peace is located on Highway 109 South, two miles past Deep Creek Road going towards Mt. Croghan, SC. The address is 11775 NC 109 South, Peachland, NC. For more information call 704-695-1441.

Dexter Lilly Charged with Multiple Sex Crimes



Dexter Lilly

On Saturday, February 3, deputies from the Anson County Sheriff's Office arrested Dexter Dewayne Lilly, 25, of Wadesboro on outstanding warrants for sexual crimes against his girlfriend's daughter. Lilly was the subject of an extensive search by law enforcement after an incident report was filed on January 28, 2018.

Lilly was charged with Indecent Liberties with a Child; Crimes Against Nature; Statutory Sex Offense with a Child by an Adult; Sex Act by a Substitute Parent; and Second Degree Forcible Sex Offense. He is currently in the Anson County Jail under a \$250,000 security bond, with a court date set for March 20, 2018, in Anson County District Court.

Sheriff Landric Reid said, "I would like to thank the community for all of the tips leading to this arrest. Also, thank you to our deputies for their hard work and dedication in the investigation. Although this arrest has been made, this is still an ongoing investigation."



Annie the Musical Opens Friday for Two Week Run at the Ansonia

Annie the Musical opens at the Ansonia this weekend. This live, locally produced play will be presented the next two weekends, February 16-18 and 23-25. Shows are at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, 3 p.m. on Sundays. Tickets are available, but going fast! Visit ansoniateatre.com or call 704-694-4950 for tickets and information.

Vancine Sturdivant Awarded North Carolina's Top Honor, The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award

At the recent Toys for Tots Gratitude Banquet held on Saturday, January 20, Anson County Commissioner and Toys for Tots Coordinator Vancine Sturdivant was presented with The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award. Created in 1963, this is one of the highest honors North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper can bestow on a citizen.

Mrs. Sturdivant, who is known for her tireless efforts to make life better for all Anson County citizens, embodies the governor's description of the award recipient: "The Order of the Long Leaf Pine Award recipient is a person who has made significant contributions to the state and their community through their exemplary service and exceptional accomplishments."

Mrs. Sturdivant is the founder and director of Faith Based Center of Hope, and more recently has established a new facility in Lilesville to enhance services for those in need. The Lilesville facility is named Gumby's in honor of Mrs. Sturdivant's late husband, William Sturdivant.

Mrs. Sturdivant said, "Dr. Maya Angelou said that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. She would never have had to tell me this. My grandmother and parents told us this daily. They would often tell us 'you treat others the way you want to be treated...no matter who it is.'"

"I do not deserve this award. I have done nothing," Mrs. Sturdivant said. "Nothing but treating people the way I would want to be treated. Without the Lord and concerned loving citizens I could not do what I do. I wish I could give the award to my husband, grandmother and my parents."

As reported in the Richmond Observer: "Sturdivant's work in the community stretches wide. She began her humanitarian efforts back in the early 1990s, following her mother's death. Her mother would feed the sick and homeless home cooked meals prepared by her own hand and deliver them to individuals throughout the county. And once she passed away, Sturdivant and her husband picked up the reigns. Sturdivant also does a coat drive called 'Warm Coats, Warm Hearts,' which collects and buys coats, hats and gloves for the homeless and less fortunate. She delivers the goods herself. She also does a lot of outreach for youth. She mentors and tutors at-risk youth, and every year she does a back-to-school drive providing many with school supplies and uniforms."

Through her mentoring Sturdivant became involved with Toys for Tots. One Christmas, one of the students mentioned that she wouldn't be getting anything, so Sturdivant and her husband purchased toys for the student. Word got around and other families reached out to the Sturdivants for support. It wasn't long before the buzz reached others in higher positions in the community and Toys for Tots asked her to become Coordinator for the area.

Sturdivant has purchased so much on her own, ranging from food, coats, school supplies and toys, that a local Dollar General is looking to forge a partnership with her to support her various projects.

"I am not worthy of it," Sturdivant said of her recognition. "I don't think I've done enough. It is my husband who should really be receiving this award, because without him I wouldn't have been able to do as much."

Sturdivant's husband, William Lafayette Sturdivant, Sr., passed away in 2015. She even contributes her being alive today to her late husband. On March 9, 2017, Sturdivant was involved in a head-on collision on her way to Richmond County to help someone in need. She was announced dead on the scene, but while clutching her husband's jacket, she was airlifted to Chapel Hill and discharged just three days later. One week later, with the help of some friends, she was back to delivering food to the sick and shut-in.

"That accident showed me that I am still here for a purpose and that purpose is to serve others," Sturdivant said. "We all have three things that we can give, and that is our time, our talent and our treasure."

If one is ever looking for Mrs. Vancine Sturdivant she can be found cooking at Gumby's. She's there every Tuesday and Thursday preparing to deliver food to the homeless, something she has done for the last 30 years."

Mrs. Sturdivant concluded, "When I grew up we were considered poor...I mean poor with a capital 'P'! My parents could not leave me wealth, but the lessons they instilled in me are so valuable. As a youth I would tell God, 'If you ever bless me with anything, I promise I will bless someone else.' I love what I do. So I do not need an award. At the end of the day, while praying, I ask God if He is pleased with what I did this day."

No past recipients are any more deserving of this honor than Anson County's own Mrs. Vancine Sturdivant, and she joins many notable past recipients including the following North Carolinians and others: Maya Angelou, Shirley Caesar, Charlie Daniels, Dale Earnhardt, John Hope Franklin, William "Bill" Friday, Roman Gabriel, Billy Graham, Andy Griffith, Jim "Catfish" Hunter, Junior Johnson, Michael Jordan, Alexander Julian, Fred Kirby, Ronnie Milsap, Hugh Morton, Gaylord Perry, Richard Petty, Earl Scroggs, General Henry Hugh Shelton, Enos Slaughter, Arthur Smith, Dean Smith, James "Bonecrusher" Smith, Bob Timberlake, Randy Travis, and Arthel L. "Doc" Watson. They are joined by such other notables as Harry Belafonte, Rod Carew, Shirley Chisolm, Joan Crawford, Phil Donahue, Gerald R Ford, John Glenn, Tipper Gore, Mia Hamm, Engelbert Humperdink, Jesse Jackson, George Jessel, George Jones, Jean Claude Killey, Coretta Scott King, Bess Myerson, Hal Needham, Leslie Neilson, Itzak Perlman, Gary Player, Sidney Poitier, Colin Powell, William H. Rehnquist, Kenny Rogers, Curtis Strange, The Blue Angels, Lanny Wadkins, Ted Williams, Tennessee Williams, Oprah Winfrey, Tammy Wynette and Andrew Young.

Several of Anson County's own have been awarded, including Altheria Patton, Paul Ricketts and Curtis Ricketts.

If you would like to help Mrs. Sturdivant's efforts as a volunteer, donor or in any other way, you can reach her at 704-848-4412. Gumby's is located on Highway 74 east of Lilesville. Just look for the big sign...you can't miss it!



All You Can Fundraiser this Saturday

Everyone is invited to work up a good appetite and come out to Lilesville Methodist Church for their delicious, all you can eat fundraiser this Saturday, February 17. There will be a variety of homemade soups, desserts and a drink.

They will be serving from 11 a.m. until 7 p.m., so you can come for lunch, dinner or both! The church is located at 310 Wall Street.

Open House Reception at the Library Sunday

The Friends of the Hampton B. Allen Library are hosting an Open House Reception at the library on Sunday, February 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. Everyone is welcome to enjoy light refreshments and learn more about the library, its impact on the community, and how they can help.

The reception will also include the dedication of the memorial for Joyce R. Liles. Joyce was a valued member of the library staff and an officer of the Friends of the Library for more than seven years. The Friends have planted rose bushes and placed a plaque in her memory.

You are invited to come and remember Joyce's contributions to the library and the community, and to learn more about the Friends of the Library! For more information call 704-694-5177.

Connections Family Support Group Meets Thursday

For those serving children with emotional, learning or behavioral challenges

The Connections Family Support Group is held the third Thursday of the month at the Hampton B. Allen Library, in the Book Mobile Room, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. The topic of discussion for February will be Gangs & Opioid Use in the community. Refreshments and resources will be provided free.

Contact Suzanne Maness at (910) 627-1769, toll free (877) 211-5995 or by email at connections-fsp@gmail.com for more information.