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People Fest is Saturday! Be sure to check out our People Fest Special Inside.

Man Shot in Gunfight at House at 210 West Morgan Street

A rental house, characterized by Wadesboro Police as a known trouble spot, located at 210 West Morgan Street was the scene of a gunfight early Sunday morning on September 30. One man was shot, two men were arrested, and the Wadesboro Police Department is looking for a third suspect.

Here is what happened, according to a police report released from the Wadesboro Police Department: On Sunday, September 30, at approximately 1:59 a.m. a Wadesboro Police officer was outside in front of the Police Department and he heard several gunshots. The officer responded toward West Morgan Street when 911 Communications dispatched a call in reference to shots fired at a rental house at 210 West Morgan Street. During further investigation officers found that a victim had been shot in the upper right shoulder. Two vehicles that were in the driveway of the rental house also had bullet holes in them.

Lt. Detective Brandon Chewning said, "According to witnesses a vehicle with four or five occupants pulled in front of the house, and Aaron Deunte Ratliff, 23, of Morven who was a passenger opened fire. Ratliff was shooting at three individuals, two of whom were inside a vehicle in the driveway, the other standing outside the vehicle. A bullet struck Quadre Devunte Sturdivant, 19, who lives at that address. Shaquille Polk, 18, of Wadesboro, returned gunfire toward Ratliff's vehicle. We arrested Polk and the driver of the car occupied by Ratliff, Jarius Quantel Erwin, 18, of Wadesboro. We are still looking for Ratliff."

Sturdivant was transported to Anson Community Hospital by Anson EMS.

Major Thedis Spencer said, "This incident was especially dangerous to the neighborhood because gunfire was exchanged in two directions. We searched the properties across the street for bullet damage, but found none." Directly across the street from the 210 house is an occupied home and The Express Building which houses several businesses and a family in an upstairs apartment.

The Wadesboro Police Department issued warrants for the arrest of three men in connection with the shooting. Two men have been arrested and placed in the Anson County Jail, and police are looking for the third. Arrested were Shaquille Polk, 18, of 1617 Bethel Road in Wadesboro and Jarius Quantel Erwin, 18, of 1264 Cedar Creek Road in Wadesboro. Polk has been charged with Attempted First Degree Murder, Discharge Weapon into an Occupied Moving Vehicle, and Assault with a Deadly Weapon with Intent to Kill. His bond was set at \$200,000. Erwin has been charged with Accessory After the Fact. His bond was set at \$100,000.

Police are looking for Aaron Deunte Ratliff, 23, of 493 Sandy Ridge Church Road in Morven. Ratliff has been charged with Attempted First Degree Murder, Assault with a Deadly Weapon with Intent to Kill, and Assault with a Deadly Weapon into an Occupied Property Causing Serious Bodily Injury.

Anyone with information as to the whereabouts of Ratliff is asked to call the Wadesboro Police Department at 704-694-2167.

The rental house involved with this violence has been the scene of several gunfire incidents, including a drive by shooting several years ago. Police responded to reports of gunfire there as recently as June 4th of this year.

People who live as far away as White Store Road and West Wade Street have contacted The Express to voice their concerns over the many occurrences of noise, frequent car traffic, boisterous parties, loud and lewd language and gunfire at this house. Businesses in the neighborhood have reported regular occurrences of females being subjected to inappropriate comments and gestures by people hanging around the front porch of the house as the women enter and leave the businesses.

911 Communications records show over 40 calls logged about the house since 2007.

According to Anson County Tax Department records the house is owned by Myrtle E. Wall of Lilesville. A man named Bill Wall told an employee of The Express that he was the landlord of the house. The Express received a letter from Lucretia Baucom who claimed to be the renter of the property.

Nine Churches Vandalized for Copper

Anson County Sheriff Tommy Allen is asking the public's help in a series of larcenies at churches where thieves are breaking into the air conditioner units and taking the copper wire. Sheriff Allen said that his office has received nine such reports over the past 30 days. The thieves are targeting churches out in rural areas.

"With a few exceptions, these are churches primarily in the western and southern end of the county," Sheriff Allen said. "Often the reports come to us on Wednesday afternoons and Saturdays and Sundays when the people go to the churches for services. The larcenies have usually occurred a day or two earlier."

"The cost of the damage to the units is usually in the thousands of dollars as opposed to the few dollars the thieves get for the copper," Allen said. "We've had several people to tell us they saw a vehicle at or near one of these churches as they passed by but thought nothing of it until they heard later about the thefts."

"We're asking the public to please call us whenever they see anything suspicious around a church. Call 911 right then. Give us a description of any vehicle or person. Get a tag number if you can, but don't approach these people. If they are desperate enough to steal from a church then they may be dangerous. Let us deal with them," the Sheriff concluded.

Suspicious activity can be reported directly to the Sheriff's Office at 704-694-4188 or simply call 911. Crime Stoppers is offering up to a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of suspects.

Head Start Awareness Celebration

In a release from Head Start: October is National Head Start Awareness month, which means it is time for Anson County's annual Head Start Awareness Celebration. This celebration will be held on October 12th at 10 a.m. at the Central Center for Children and Families (351 White Store Road in Wadesboro). All citizens of Anson County are invited to take part in the festivities.

The Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Anson County are operated by Union County Community Action, Inc. (UCCA) and serve children from birth to age four. The Head Start and Early Head Start Programs ensure children are screened for physical and mental health issues and provided with access to adequate care for any identified issues, provided with diverse and healthy each day, and educated following best practices in Early Childhood Education and National Head Start Standards.

For more information on the Head Start Program in Anson County please contact UCCA, Inc. Family Services Manager Kishi Tillman at (704) 283-1114.

UCCA is a local non-profit organization, operating out of Monroeville, with 160 employees committed to building better communities. In addition to operating the Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Anson, Richmond, and Union Counties, UCCA also provides workforce training and job placement for youth and adults in Anson and Union Counties. For more information on UCCA, Inc. and the services provided please visit www.uccainc.org.

Homecoming Football Tickets Available Now, Parade is Friday



Pre-sale tickets for Friday's Homecoming game against Marvin Ridge are available at Lacy's in uptown Wadesboro. The tickets are \$6 each. The Homecoming Parade will take place in uptown Wadesboro this Friday, October 12 at 5 p.m.

Benefit for 2 Year Old Battling Leukemia

Everyone is invited to come out for the all day benefit for Emma Rose Poplin-Revels on Saturday, November 3. Emma is a two year old little girl battling leukemia. She was diagnosed on December 27, 2011, and has since been receiving chemotherapy, regular platelet and blood transfusions and has had some long hospital stays. This benefit is to help Emma and her family with medical expenses and other expenses related to Emma's illness.

Lots of great activities will be happening that day. Lunch and dinner will be served, there will be a raffle, corn hole and children's games, a silent auction, a motorcycle dice run, a bake sale - and the day will be capped off with a very special performance by the band Nighthawk, featuring Gary Gilmore and Gary Young from 7 to 9 p.m.

The event will take place at Circle G Arena in Lilesville (338 Horseback Lane). Festivities start with the registration for the dice run, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The dice run will roll out at noon.

Food will be served all day, starting at 11:30 a.m. They are serving hot dogs and BBQ sandwiches. For a \$1 donation you can enter the raffle for the grand prize, a \$500 gift card! There will be a silent auction for a 2000 Harley Davidson Sportster 1200XL with less than 12,000 miles. The starting bid is \$1,500.

The dice run offers trophies for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place. There is a donation of \$20 per bike. Of course donations will be gratefully accepted from non-participants in the dice run. For more information contact Debbie Poe Gilmore at 704-475-4220 or Melanie Scercy at 910-690-6390.

Think Pink in October and Remember Your Health

October, the month when you may have traditionally remembered the colors of fall, now may prompt you to think pink, as it is designated in America as National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. With a pink ribbon as its symbol, you surely have seen the signs all around our community, state and nation.

Originally organized to increase awareness of the disease and to fund research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure, Breast Cancer Awareness Month is also a means to support those directly affected and to remind women to be proactive in their own detection.

As with most things, there are both supporters and critics. But whether or not you agree or disagree with the hoopla surrounding the designation of October as "NBCAM," every woman could use the parades of pink to persuade them into positive, proactive protection of their frontal protrusions!

Often we hear that a good rule of thumb is to use the changing either to or from standard time to daylight savings time to replace batteries in our smoke detectors, which could save homes and lives. We follow that general rule in our home, so it wasn't such a far fetched idea when I began seeing those now familiar pink symbolic ribbons as early as September that I remembered to take a proactive approach toward my own health. This year I remembered to schedule my yearly physical and mammogram, and had both at the end of September. Afterwards I received the daunting telephone call that no one wants to hear, "We need for you to come back in for further testing, there is a suspicious area in your right breast." My followup appointment was set for over a week later. Faced with what would seem an eternity to wait...and worry, I was relieved to get an earlier appointment through the help of close friends who had recently been through a breast cancer experience.

My mind was filled with stories of both horror and renewed health, but the very long days in between lapsed slower than a snail's pace and my worry took control of all else. After my initial screening the nurse said, "Melanie, we WILL see you in a year, right?" And I responded, of course, with a yes. But the truth is, I had not been proactive in my own breast health for quite a while and couldn't even remember when my last exam was. When I left the office that day I felt good that I had taken care of that detail, and I assured myself that I would, from now on, make it a yearly practice. As I drove home I noticed pink ribbons all around the city of Charlotte because they are everywhere! And I again realized that those pretty pink images prompted me toward my hopeful prevention.

After the first check up and the phone call I received, and what seemed one of the longest wait periods of my life until the second exam, it was time for a second look at my "suspicious area." And though I was glad to finally get some answers, I was also terrified to learn the truth. That day was a long, long day as I sat alone in a cold, isolated room somewhere in the Presbyterian Breast Center. Allen accompanied me of course, but wasn't allowed in. So his day was long and alone as well.

A more extensive form of mammography revealed that I would need an ultrasound and after that reading, a second ultrasound. The further I was tested the more I thought, oh my, this has to be worse than I imagined. And even though one may try to remain positive and trust their faith, it can begin to wane after the eleventh hour.

It took the doctor who performed my second ultrasound approximately two seconds to say, "There is nothing to worry about," as she placed her hand on my shoulder.

"But we WILL see you in another year, right Melanie?" And I replied with a very emphatic "Yes!" As it turns out, I am ashamed to say that I had not had a true breast exam in almost ten years, and my family history speaks volumes as to the many, many reasons that is unacceptable. I was stupid with my own health, my own life.

This chapter is over for now, and it ended happily. But it could have easily ended another way, like the millions of women who have fought the fight and either won, or lost. I can honestly and unequivocally say that I will never again miss my yearly physical. I will be proactive in my health and I will do everything I can to beat the odds already stacked against me through an inherited family history. I am out of the woods now, but it doesn't mean I can stop fighting, for it is an ongoing battle.

On Monday, October 1 I was thrilled and thankful to God for the good news I received. (Me too! Editor) On the way home I saw those same pink ribbons tied beautifully around nearly every corner and I smiled. Pink has always been my favorite color, and forever more will be. I will use October and its signature color as a reminder for proactive prevention and I will continue with self-exams every month. I hope this will serve as a reminder for YOU as well. Do it for yourself, do it for those who love you. *By Melanie Lyon*

Sheriff's Youth Skeet Shoot is October 20

Anson County Sheriff Tommy Allen announces the tenth annual Anson County Sheriff's Youth Skeet Shoot on Saturday, October 20 at Devil's Rib Hunting Preserve in Peachland. Registration will begin at 12 noon and the shooting will begin at 1 p.m. This is for "youth only" up to 18 years old. Last year over thirty youth participated in the event.

There will be three divisions: 14 and younger; 15-16 years old; and 17-18 years old. There will also be a Championship round open to any age shooter 18 and under. Trophies will be given for first and second place for each division along with an overall champion.

There is no entry fee charge as sponsors have made donations to support the event. Shooters need only to bring their shotguns and shells. All funds left over after expenses will be used for the Sheriff's DARE Program and the Sheriff's Christmas Bicycle Program.

Family, friends and the public are invited. Bring your folding chairs and enjoy the amazing skills of these young shooters. Free refreshments will be available. The Devil's Rib Hunting Preserve is located off the Peachland-Polk Road, about 2 miles east of the Peachland city limits sign. For more information call 704-694-4188.

Compassionate Friends Meet Thursday

The Compassionate Friends, a support group for families who have lost a child of any age and from any cause, meets on Thursday, October 11 at 7 p.m. in the Training Room at Pee Dee Electric on Highway 52 South in Wadesboro.

For information call 704-694-8774 or 704-475-5005.

New Beginnings Cancer Support Group Meets

The New Beginnings Cancer Support Group will meet on Monday, October 15 at the Lady Bug Restaurant at 6 p.m. Stephen Greene will be speaking about his mission trip to Venezuela.

For more information call 704-694-3988.

CROP Hunger Walk is Sunday

The First Presbyterian Church in Wadesboro is the organizer for the 2012 Anson County CROP Walk to be held this Sunday, October 14. It is an effort to raise funds to help ease hunger in Anson County and around the world. This will be one of over 1,600 such events across the country, all with one simple goal: Ending hunger one step at a time.

Although this is a fundraising effort, it also is an opportunity to come together as a community of neighbors who support one another. So, organizers urge people to join in the walk even if they are not able to donate money.

The route is suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels. Those unable to walk the entire route may use the Wadesboro Park Trail, which is a 7/10 mile flat, paved walking trail that is handicap accessible.

For more information, contact the church at 704-694-3818 or by email at fpcwadesboro@windstream.net.

Early Voting at Board of Education Offices

Early Voting will be held at the Anson County Schools Board of Education offices located at 320 Camden Road in Wadesboro (right across from Wadesboro Elementary School) October 18 through November 3.

Here are the details:
• Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
• Saturday, October 27, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

• Sunday, October 28, 2 to 5 p.m.
• Saturday, November 3, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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