

From the Sheriff's Desk

From Sheriff Tommy Allen: The New Year is here and 2014 will see many exciting things. One of those is the election of a new Sheriff for Anson County. There will also be commissioner elections; state house and senate races, and some national races for Washington offices. But few local races draw as much attention as that of the local Sheriff's race. That is as it should be because the Sheriff is considered the most powerful elected local office. The Sheriff is an extremely powerful individual.

I thought I'd address the importance of this year's Sheriff's election over the next two months by starting with some history of the office of Sheriff and the duties and responsibilities. Next month I'll write about what the public should look for and expect from their Sheriff.

The office of Sheriff goes back well into the first millennium. It originated in England where it first came into existence around the 9th century. This makes the Sheriff the oldest continuing, non-military, law enforcement entity in history. In early England the land was divided into geographic areas called shires. Within each shire was an individual known as a "reeve," appointed by the King, to protect the King's interest and carry out the edicts and acts of the King. Through time and usage, the words shire and reeve came together to be the "shire-reeve," the guard of the shire; and eventually the word "Sheriff" was used.

The term and concept of Sheriff came to the new world with the American Colonies. The first Sheriffs were generally appointed by large land holders. Eventually most Sheriffs were elected and served at the pleasure of the public they served. The early American Sheriff was important to the security of the people and had much power including the execution of criminals by hanging.

As the new world expanded westward so did the office of Sheriff. There were many interesting individuals, including Augustin Washington, Sheriff of Westmoreland County, Virginia and the father of George Washington. There was Wild Bill Hickcock, Pat Garrett, Bat Masterson and Wyatt Earp in towns such as Dodge City, Deadwood and Tombstone.

In the United States today there are Sheriffs in all states except three. Alaska has no county government and no Sheriff. Connecticut has no Sheriff, but a State Marshal system. Hawaii has no Sheriff, but there is a "deputy sheriff" division in their Department of Public Safety. Most Sheriffs today are elected.

The modern day Sheriff is generally considered the chief law enforcement officer in the county. In addition to criminal investigations and law enforcement related calls, the Sheriff is responsible for operating the county jail, security in the court system, serving civil papers, and transporting prisoners and mental patients to and from various facilities. Today's Sheriff must develop good working relationships with all local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

North Carolina has one hundred counties and one hundred Sheriffs. One is female. Not an untypical day in the life of a Sheriff involves meeting with office staff, jail staff or 911 staff on the day's activities; handling dozens of telephone calls and emails; dealing with walk-in visits from citizens with various issues; one, two or more meetings dealing with any number of issues; looking at budgets; and signing off on purchase orders, invoices and other financial documents. The Sheriff will greet judges and other court officials for the day's one, two or more courts that may be going on. This list could continue for several more paragraphs.

Today's Sheriff runs a multi-million dollar operation like a business. He must have a good sense as to how to run that business. His product is "service" and the public is his customer. Today's modern Sheriff must be a skilled businessman, understand how to deal with both the public and his staff; have an extremely good working knowledge of both criminal and civil law; and do all this with the sense of fairness and understanding of human nature. Next time I'll discuss what is needed to do all this and serve in the most powerful position in county government.

Toys For Tots Free Gratitude Banquet is Friday

Anson County will host the Toys For Tots Free Gratitude Banquet this Friday, January 10 at the Lockhart-Taylor Center in Wadesboro. Festivities begin at 6 p.m. with the get acquainted session, the banquet will begin at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free for all donors, sponsors and drop-off locations. Each participant will receive banquet admissions tickets.

The guest speaker for the hour will be County Manager Lawrence Gatewood. Greetings will come from Senator Gene McLaurin, Attorney Fred D. Poisson, Christopher Rhue and elected officials.

Vancine Sturdivant, Coordinator for Anson County, stated, "One of the requirements of Toys For Tots is that citizens of Anson County prove they are willing to come together and help the less fortunate of their county. We truly did this during the 2013 Christmas Holiday. We were able to bless over 3,000 kids with toys. Each child was given 3 to 4 toys and stocking stuffers. Due to the generosity of Clerk Mark Hammonds, New Home Baptist Church, Dieffenbach and Judy's Tax Service each elementary school was presented a bicycle to give to a deserving student, and we still had over 12 bikes to pass out to kids. We also want to thank Partnership For Children and Elaine Scarborough for the books each child from 0 - 5 years old received."

Sturdivant concluded, "Now we invite all the citizens who helped make this possible to come let us, the Executive Board of Anson County Toys For Tots, say 'Thank You.' All tickets are free."

For further information, tickets or to reserve seating, please contact the Executive Committee: Vancine Sturdivant, (704 848-4412; Dr. Bernice Bennett (704) 694-6616; Jennifer Tarlton (704) 694-3115; Winnie Brown (704) 475-0755.

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**Town of Polkton
PART-TIME POLICE OFFICER OPENING**

The Town of Polkton, North Carolina is accepting applications for a Part-Time Police Officer. Must be North Carolina Basic Law Enforcement Training certified and have worked in Law Enforcement for (2) two years consecutively.

NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE

This position is a patrol position wherein typical police patrol duties will be assigned. The ideal candidate will have experience in sworn law enforcement in a rural setting and, as an officer in Polkton, will handle cases from start to finish (with assistance from supervision and outside agencies as appropriate). The part-time position will be required to work a minimum of (20) twenty hours per week but not to exceed (1,000) one-thousand hours in a year.

The Polkton Police Department will not offer employment or respond to candidates who are not legally employable as a police officer, or persons not legally permitted to possess and carry a firearm, etc.

The application process will remain open until filled or January 14, 2014, whichever comes last. Resumes received prior to January 1, 2013 will not be considered for employment. Please mail or bring application, resume, and F3 to:

Chief Matthew L. Norris, Polkton Police Department
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Development Potential - Investor Price: Approximately 15 acres on Fifth Street in Hamlet. Approximately 575 feet of frontage on Fifth Street, approximately 350 feet frontage on Old Cheraw Highway. Beside WKDX Radio Station in residential area, approximately 1 mile from Highway 74. Sold as one parcel. **\$30,000**

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10-10xfn
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