

142
Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 49
Wadesboro, NC
28170

Postal
Customer

THE EXPRESS

205 West Morgan Street • Wadesboro, NC 28170 • 704-694-2480 • TheExpressNews@gmail.com • www.TheExpressNewspaper.com

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



'Project Feed a Child' Begun by the Shaundasia T. Smith Foundation

A tax deductible donation of \$250 will sponsor an Anson County child for a year

The Shaundasia T. Smith Foundation has started 'Project Feed a Child,' a backpack program for high school teens who may not have enough to eat over the weekend. The program is directed by foundation board members Patti Poulcott and Christine Hall.

The backpacks were distributed for the first time on Friday, January 27.

"The foundation is involved in things that meant a lot to Shaundasia, and giving to those who didn't have enough to eat was important to her," said Patti Poulcott. "The need to help others in this county is great, and poverty is all around us. Through the foundation we are changing lives and making a difference in our community. In the midst of tragedy we are finding ways to heal ourselves and our community by reaching out to others in need."

The backpacks contain food items such as ravioli, spaghetti, lasagna, pop top individual cans of beanie weenies, etc. They also include fruit snacks, gummies, cookies, pop tarts, grits, air head candy, water, juice, crackers, apple sauce, granola bars, mac and cheese individuals - lots of things the kids can heat and make themselves with little or no assistance.

The food items may vary, but the main item that is constant each week is a can of Pringles potato chips - that was Shaundasia's favorite snack so they are in each bag each time the bags go out. The kids take the backpacks home on Friday and return them on Monday morning for the next month.

The bags are given out at the school once a month, and there are at least two meals and multiple snacks in there for the child.

Poulcott continued, "We know the children with the backpacks are not the only ones hungry in the house, so there are multiple things they can share. But, we only have the funds to do a bag for each child we are preparing the bag for. We wanted to do something from the foundation that meant something to Shaundasia. She always cared about helping and taking care of others in need."

The recipients' identities are kept private so they cannot be singled out as in need by other students.

Poulcott added, "We would love to have the funds to provide food for these kids for every weekend. We the board are providing the food now for the rest of the school year, but our end goal is to get the food to these kids each week when we are financially able. We are doing what we can to provide for these kids in need."

"We collaborated with the high school guidance department and Principal Chris Stinson to get the list of the kids who were in need. We could not have gotten any of this done without their help in this effort, for they are the ones allowing us to reach these kids that we would otherwise not have been able to help. It is very much a group effort," Poulcott said.

Cassandra Reid said, "The school counselor and social worker work with the students daily, and they have a better understanding of who needs assistance. They select the students in the program. The foundation does not know the names of any of the students who receive a back pack. The foundation buys the food, packs the backpacks, and takes them to the counselor by Thursday for Friday distribution. The school counselor makes sure each student get his or her backpack before they leave on Friday. Right now we are doing the last Friday of the month because the school counselor and social worker believe that is the most likely weekend that most would not have enough to eat at home. In the future we hope to add more weekends to the program."

Poulcott concluded, "In summary, the backpacks are full of food for two days once a month, given out on Friday and returned on Monday, from the high school. We pick the bags up, pack them for the next month, and deliver them back to the school the next month."

If you would like to help, any monetary donation of any amount will help meet the needs of our youth and their future. To sponsor a child for a year only takes a tax deductible donation of \$250 to the foundation. Any board member would be able to give you information on the program. For donations please contact Patti Poulcott at 704-694-8386 or Christine Hall at 704-690-2596. The Shaundasia T Smith Foundation is exempt under IRS section 501(c)(3) and any donations to the foundation are fully tax deductible.

Connections Family Support Group Meets Monthly

For those serving children with emotional, learning or behavioral challenges

On the third Tuesday of each month the Connections Family Support Program holds a group meeting for parents, grandparents and foster parents serving children with emotional, learning or behavioral challenges. These meetings are free and include brunch.

The meetings take place at the Hampton B. Allen Library, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. For more information contact Suzanne Maness, Family Advocate, at 877-211-5995 (toll free) or email connectionsfsp@gmail.com.



Winners in the Anson County Writers' Club contest are pictured above. They are, from left, front row: Angalique Marya Pratt, Charity Harris, Cale Melton, Lawson Grant Woods and Anna Claire Davis. Back row: Rufus Getzen, Tracy Preslar, Kaye Ratliff, John Marak, Katelyn Howell and Airyn Jones.

Anson Writers Recognized at Awards Ceremony

Anson County authors received certificates of honor and cash prizes at the 28th Awards Ceremony of the Anson County Writers' Club (ACWC). The event was held in the Little Theatre at the Hampton B. Allen Library on Sunday, February 26.

ACWC president Kaye Ratliff welcomed the winners of the 2016 contests in prose and poetry and their families. "There is a lot of talent in this county and we want to foster that talent," Ratliff said. "The club does this through the annual contests, bringing public recognition to the winners, and offering workshops, lectures, and readings that are open to the public."

Beverly Getzen and Randy Larlton, contest co-chairmen, awarded the prizes. "There is amazing creativity in this county," Getzen said. "Kudos to the teachers for encouraging their students to enter."

Awards in each category were:

- Youth Prose, grades 3-6: First Place, "A Simple Life Princess Fairy Tale" by Charity Harris; and Second Place, "Walmart Princess" by Angalique Mary Pratt, both of Lilesville Elementary School.
- Youth Poetry, grades 3-6: First Place, "A Wonderful Place Called Heaven" by Cale Melton; Second Place, "My First Deer" by Lawson Grant Woods; and Third Place, "Beautiful Beach" by Anna Claire Davis, all of Ansonville Elementary School.
- First Place in Youth Prose, grades 10-12, went to Katelyn Howell for "Rise." She attends Anson County Early College.
- Airyn Jones won First Place in Youth Poetry, grades 10-12, for "Starry Night." She attends Anson County Early College.
- John Marak of Wadesboro won First Place in the Adult Prose contest for his short story, "Bandito."
- Adult Poetry winners were Rufus Getzen, First Place for "Cyrus;" Kaye Ratliff, Second Place for "Loving Peter Pan;" and Tracy Preslar for "Catching Memories." All reside in Wadesboro.

Preslar, a teacher at Ansonville Elementary School, counted three of her students among the winners.

Following the awards ceremony, attendees enjoyed refreshments and punch.

The annual contests open in September and close in December. Entries are judged by members of the Union County Writers Club who do not see the names of the authors.

The Anson County Writers' Club meets at the Chamber of Commerce office, from 3 to 5 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month except in July and December. All meetings are open to the public. For more information call Sandy Bruney at 704-694-5211 or email sandybruney@gmail.com.

NETworX Founder Introduces Background, Goals of Program

Rev. Dr. Alan Rice and Crystal Imes spoke at a NETworX informational meeting on February 18 at First United Methodist Church in Wadesboro. Rice is executive director of the Rural Faith Development Community Development Corporation (RFD CDC) and founding director of NETworX USA, an initiative of RFD CDC. Imes wrote the children's curriculum for the program and leads the children's program for NETworX Kids.

Rev. Norma Villagrana, administrator of Anson NETworX, greeted the assembly and said that NETworX's goal is bringing individuals and community together to build bridges of love. "Change comes when good people come together," she said.

Rice explained the difference between NETworX and Circles of Hope. Wadesboro organized the first Circles of Hope site in North Carolina in 2007, starting as Bridges Out of Poverty, a part of the aha! Process. "Anson County was a showpiece," Rice said. "By 2014 there were 15 sites in North Carolina and 60 across the United States."

In 2015 Circles was sold, then regained by the original founder, who asked members to cease and desist using the Circles name if they continued to follow a faith-based approach.

People from 10 different states asked for a new program, Rice said, and NETworX USA was organized with its base in Yadkinville.

The name is an acronym of Nurture, Education, and Transformation. The X is the Greek letter Chi, the first letter in Christ's name.

Some differences are readily apparent. Participants are called Champions of Change, not Circle Leaders. They and their allies take the 12-15 week class together, not just the Champions as previously. And, children study a child-friendly version of the adult workbook.

Although many sites are secular, the program follows the Wesleyan tradition, which didn't begin in a church but with poor miners, farmers, and others in poverty. John Wesley believed that education was a key component to escaping poverty and started "Sunday Schools" to teach children who worked six days a week to read and write. Illiterate adults soon followed. Wesley provided not only schools, but medicine, clothing, coal, and most importantly, a ladder of opportunity.

Rice said the NETworX model includes rethinking poverty, reframing solutions, reshaping community and restoring abundance.

Rice touched on the cost. Former Circles sites pay one-half of the \$5,000 annual fee that includes training, coaches, library resources and outcome tracking. He also discussed some fundraising methods and was impressed with the Anson Circles fundraiser, "Dancing with the Stars."

Imes shared her story as a Circles graduate. Her husband lost his job just after they relocated with their four children. Circles helped her as a stranger to the community to meet people and make connections. Speaking of the weekly meal and childcare offered, Imes said, "The best way to break down barriers is to break bread together."

The NETworX program is adaptable to each site, Imes said. "We can change the curriculum to meet the need."

To be eligible to join the program, an applicant must have stable housing, a commitment to sobriety, be committed to change, and if having mental health issues, must be in treatment.

For more information about the Anson NETworX call Norma Villagrana at 816-351-4232.

Wadesboro Tree Trimming and Limb Removal Guidelines

The Town of Wadesboro will collect and dispose of tree trimmings and limbs for the citizens of Wadesboro. The following rules apply :

- The service is intended for homeowners who trim trees and shrubbery on their property by the homeowner. The service is NOT intended for home owners that hire tree surgeons, contractors, etc. to cut trees/limbs and cuttings.
- The Town will NOT remove trees/limbs, etc. from lot clearing operations.
- Please limit the size of limbs to four inches in diameter and six feet long.
- Place the debris near the street, away from power poles or other obstacles. Do not place limbs in the ditches. Do not place debris where it blocks the view of traffic.

For further information or questions please contact Hugh James, Public Services Director, at 704-694-5171.

Ansonville VFD Barbecue is Saturday

Round up the family and head to the Ansonville Fire Department this Saturday, March 4 where you can enjoy some of the best barbecue in these parts. They take the time to prepare their pork, beef and chicken perfectly! They begin serving at 11 a.m., and will serve until they run out. But, don't wait too late...you might miss it!

The Ansonville Fire Department is located on Highway 52.

Uptown Wadesboro Board Meeting is March 7

The Uptown Wadesboro Board of Directors will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday March 7 at 4 p.m. in the Anson County Chamber of Commerce conference room. The focus will be on new activities and projects for 2017 such as a Spring Festival.

Blood Drive is March 14

A Wadesboro Community Blood Drive will be held on Tuesday, March 14, from 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the First Baptist Church on Lee Avenue.

To schedule a life saving appointment please visit www.redcrossblood.org and enter the sponsor code 'Wadesboro Community.'