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

Harris Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church Holds Sesquicentennial Celebration

That's 150 years! Harris Chapel is Anson's first African American church.

In the year of 1865, little did the men and women of Harris Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church know when they chose to worship under a brush arbor in Morven, NC on Highway 145 South that they were making history as the first African American church in Anson County. On Saturday morning, March 7, 2015, members of Harris Chapel began the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of their church with a simple brush arbor service held outside under the trees.

Those in attendance shared fond memories which span nearly 70 years ago. Balloons were released at the end of the service in memory of their forefathers. Having chosen the theme "Remembering, Celebrating and Renewing Our Purpose" for the occasion, members centered all activities around it.

On Sunday morning, March 8, former pastor Dr. Charlotte Brown delivered the morning message, "Upon this Rock." Dr. Brown is currently a second term District Court Judge in Mecklenburg County. Bishop George Battle, Jr., the Senior Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District, delivered the afternoon anniversary message, "The Journey." Marilynn Bennett, the Anniversary Committee Chairperson, presented the church history.

It was an honor and the first time that the Bishop has visited and worshipped with the Harris Chapel Church family. Known for his benevolence, Bishop Battle blessed Commissioner Vancine Sturdivant, CEO of Faith-Based Center of Hope with not only a personal, generous monetary offering, but also directed his wife, Missionary Supervisor Iris J. Battle, to give to Mrs. Sturdivant's agency the blankets and coats collected this year by the A.M.E. Zion churches. This unexpected, overwhelming act of kindness moved Commissioner Sturdivant to tears and left her speechless for a brief moment.

The church's oldest active members, Mr. Edward Capel, 96 years old, and Mrs. Tommie L. Pratt, 90 years old, were in attendance the entire day. Former and out of town members from the Clyde and Ina Owens family, the Charlie and Wilhelmina Cason family, the Eva Mae Bennett family and the Isaac and Annie Mae Owens family joined the celebration. Rockingham District Presiding Elder Michael J. Massey, District Lay Council President Carolyn Quick, District Missionary Supervisor Pat McCoy and Sheriff Landric Reid attended the afternoon service.

Acknowledgements of appreciation are extended to families and friends from New York, Virginia and North Carolina and to local businesses from pastor Rev. Dr. Bernice Bennett and the entire Harris Chapel church family for their support in making this historic celebration joyous and successful.

Submitted by Marilynn Bennett

Faith-Based Center of Hope Blessed During Harris Chapel 150 Year Anniversary



In a release from Faith-Based Center of Hope: Bishop George E. Battle, Jr., Senior Bishop of the A.M.E. Zion Church and the Presiding Prelate of the Piedmont Episcopal District, along with Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Iris Miller Battle of the Piedmont

Episcopal District, challenged the congregation to help Faith-Based Center of Hope provide coats, blankets and hygiene products for the citizens of Anson County.

At the opening of the 123rd Session of the Western North Carolina Conference (WNCC) at the Hickory Metro Convention Center in Hickory, NC Bishop Battle not only set the tone for the WNCC, but he also set the theme for this Quadrennial - "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto You." - Matthew 6:33.

During the 150 Year Anniversary celebration at Harris Chapel AME Zion Church, Pastor Dr. Bernice Bennett allowed Commissioner Vancine Sturdivant to announce about her "Warm Hearts, Warm Coats" program. Bishop George E. Battle, Jr was so moved by the program he donated \$1,000 and asked the church to donate to this great cause. Pastor Luther McLendon and Steward Anthony Fair presented Commissioner Sturdivant with \$1,387. Bishop Battle also stated that all the non-perishable products taken up in June during the Convention at Four Seasons in Greensboro will be donated to Faith-Based Center of Hope.

Commissioner Sturdivant, truly astounded by the outpouring of love, thanked Bishop Battle, Missionary Supervisor Mrs. Iris Battle, Elder Michael Massey and Rev. Dr. Bernice Bennett. She stated, "The funds will truly help bless our homeless. So many of the things we take for granted, they do not have. I know this is why God has me here. To be a blessing to others."

Sturdivant continued, "My goal this year is to find a building to run not just the "Warm Hearts, Warm Coats" program from, but also our Feeding the Homeless, Back to School with Pride and Toys for Tots."

Anyone who would like to donate to this program please contact Ester Lindsey at 704 848-8452 or Vancine Sturdivant at 704 848-4412.

US Army to Conduct Training Exercise in Uptown Wadesboro

On Tuesday, March 31 Army Special Forces Robin Sage students will conduct a training exercise on the Tollison Building in uptown Wadesboro at the intersection of North Washington and East Morgan Streets.

This Robin Sage training exercise will occur between 6:30 7 p.m. and will feature "blank" gunfire noises. While these gunfire noises will be loud, they will not be dangerous to the public.

Coordination between the Army and Wadesboro town officials has ensured all safety concerns are addressed. During the exercise Wadesboro Police will block off the area around the Tollison building as a safety measure.

Spectators are welcome to watch the training exercise from a distance.

Town of Wadesboro Special Budget Meetings

The Town of Wadesboro Town Council will be holding special meetings in April to discuss the 2015-2016 Budget. The meetings will be held at the Town of Wadesboro Conference Room at 5 p.m. Below is a list of the meeting dates:

- April 7 - Sanitation • April 14 - Police, Fire • April 21 - Streets, Shop, Parks
- April 28 - Water, Sewer • May 5 - Administration, Personnel, Insurance
- May 12 - Capital Improvement Plan

Bearcat Brawl Softball Tournament is this Weekend

Anson Middle School will be hosting a Bearcat Brawl Softball Tournament at the Field of Dreams Athletic Complex in Polkton in late March. Five teams from the surrounding area have been invited to participate in the two day tournament. These teams include Anson Middle, Long Middle, Hartsville Middle, Piedmont Middle and West Stanly Middle.

The two day tournament will occur on Friday and Saturday, March 20 and 21. Games will start at 5 p.m. on Friday and 10 a.m. on Saturday. Admission for adults and school-aged students aged 6 and older is \$5. Any child aged 5 or younger will have free admission to the tournament.

Should rain occur on the initial tournament dates the tournament will be rescheduled for Friday and Saturday, March 27 and 28 with starting times of 5 p.m. and 10 a.m. respectively.



Pictured here are some of the student volunteers with their leader, Brittany Clark (second from right) of Anson High School's Rotary Interact Club.

Barn Blast Volunteers are the Best!

This is a release from the Anson County Partnership for Children: At the 2015 Barn Blast, more than 100 volunteers shared their time and skills to make the event a success demonstrating the strong support for young children and families in Anson County.

The Barn Blast Auction Committee works hard for several months prior to the Barn Blast to acquire a wide assortment of items for the Live and Silent Auctions. Strong-backed volunteers assist Partnership staff with moving auction items, tables, food and decorations into the Lockhart-Taylor Center before the event and back to the Partnership after the event.

First-time and returning guests are always amazed at the unique Barn Blast decorations. Decorating Chair Ashley Rivers Scarborough leads her committee to transform the Ingram Room into a western themed barn complete with hay bales, old farm equipment, windows brimming with chickens and eggs and other memories of bygone rural times. Decorating volunteers play close attention to detail to ensure that guests fully experience the theme of Barn Blast each year.

The Barn Blast games always add fun, excitement and profits to the fundraiser. Volunteers sell blinky boot necklaces for the Heads and Tails Game, plastic ducks for the Lucky Ducky Game and tickets for the Bonanza Raffle. In addition, volunteers run the Lucky Ducky Store, where guests redeem their ducks for prizes. It takes many volunteers to make sure both the Live and Silent Auctions go smoothly at the Barn Blast. The professional auctioneers who volunteered their expertise to the 2015 Barn Blast included Senator Tom McInnis, Joe Dutton and Kyle Davis.

The tradition of delicious food at the Barn Blast is accomplished by dozens of volunteers in the two kitchens at Lockhart-Taylor Center. Jack and Betty Ratliff, who have volunteered their time for all 9 Barn Blasts, provide the expertise behind the grilled chicken, cooked on the premises, along with Betty's famous sides. Beth Rogers, the longest serving Partnership Board member, manages the second kitchen and has also volunteered at each of the 9 Barn Blasts. In addition, volunteers in both kitchens prepare, plate and serve the food to Barn Blast guests.

Most visible at the 2015 Barn Blast were the 32 fresh faced student volunteers from Anson Early College, Anson High School and other area schools dressed in white shirts, jeans and red bandanas. These students are assigned as table servers to the 42 tables at the Barn Blast delivering food to guests. In addition, students help prepare hors d'oeuvres and desserts in the kitchens. Robbie James of Anson Early College and Brittany Clark of Anson High School's Rotary Interact Club, assisted with recruitment of student volunteers.

Volunteers in Miss Kitty's Saloon stay busy throughout the night providing libation to Barn Blast guests. Volunteers also keep the tea, coffee, soft drinks, and water flowing all evening. Volunteer professional photographers made the captivating photos of the event which are posted on the ACPC Facebook page and website (www.ansonchildren.org).

Anson County Partnership for Children Board members serve in many volunteer capacities to make the Barn Blast a success including greeting guests, speaking at the event, assisting with registration, working in the kitchen, acquiring sponsorships and auction items, selling Barn Blast tickets, assisting with games, serving as table captains and even donating hugs during the Live Auction. This service is an indication of the Board members' commitment to the Partnership mission of "making Anson County a better place to be a child and to raise a child."

As the fundraiser came to a close at 11:30 pm on January 30, Barn Blast guests magically transformed into volunteers without being asked. Many of the remaining guests cleared tables, removed tablecloths, put food away, took down signs and assisted Partnership staff with the cleanup process. In addition to being a tremendous help, this effort demonstrates the guests' support of young children.

Without Barn Blast volunteers, the Anson County Partnership for Children would not be able to reach the children and families it serves each year. If you would like to volunteer for the 2016 Barn Blast or other Partnership events, please contact the Partnership at 704-694-4036 or www.ansonchildren.org.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz Presented by Local Actors at the Ansonia Debuts this weekend!

Dorothy is trying to get back to Kansas and home! Along the way she is joined by Scarecrow, the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and a wonderful group of delightful munchkins. Oh no! Then there is the wicked Witch of the West and her two evil sidekicks. Thanks goodness for Glinda, the good witch and of course, the Wonderful Wizard of Oz.

Join the whole cast for a fabulous evening of entertainment! You will leave singing. This adaptation of Frank Baum's magical tale, written by Michele L. Vacca and further adapted by a very talented group of Ansonians, will be presented at the Ansonia Theatre beginning this weekend. There are presentations on March 20,21 and 22, then again on March 27,28 and 29. Friday and Saturday shows are at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday shows are at 3 p.m.



Hurry and reserve your seats before they are all sold out. Call 704 694-4950. The box office is open Monday through Friday, from noon 'til 5. At other times you can leave a message.

Welcome to Medicare Seminar is Thursday

There will be a seminar entitled "The Road To Medicare: Planning Your Drive" held at Grace Senior Center on Thursday March 19th at 2 p.m. This seminar is for those individuals interested in information concerning Medicare. It is important for everyone becoming eligible for Medicare to get accurate information about coverage and delivery options, including supplemental health insurance, Medicare health plans and prescription drug coverage. Persons interested should call Grace Senior Center at 704-694-6616 to register or for additional information.

BCSWCD Board Meeting

The Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation District monthly board meeting will be held Tuesday, March 24 10 a.m. at the BCSWCD office located at 1758 Morven Road in Wadesboro.

For more information call 704-694-3516.