

THE EXPRESS

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

Shop with a Cop Took Place on Friday, December 19

On Friday, December 19, officers with the Wadesboro Police Department, along with partners from the SBI and Federal Wildlife Law Enforcement, the Wadesboro Town Council and Manager, took 12 local children shopping for Christmas as part of the department's annual Shop with a Cop program.

Throughout the year the police department has been raising money through fundraisers, sponsors and donations to help make it possible to do the program. Each year local schools and Department of Social Services nominate families who are in the most need for help. The police department then takes the selected nominees shopping with police officers. This year, because of the overwhelming support from the community, the police department was able to give each child a \$200 budget to spend on whatever they wanted for Christmas. They were also provided a free meal at a fast food restaurant.

The toys picked this year ranged from bicycles, video games and various toys, to gaming chairs, remote control cars and the latest fashions. Sales associates assisted with shopping and keeping up with each child's budget.

The Wadesboro Police Department's two largest fundraisers are an annual motorcycle ride and a 5k Run/Walk race. These two fundraisers raised nearly \$2,000 for the charity this year making it possible to do more for the community.

"Support from local businesses and organizations like Poisson, Poisson & Bower Law Firm, the Anson Record and The Express Newspaper, to name a few, is why our department is able to truly be a community policing department," said Wadesboro Police Chief Thedis L. Spencer.

"Without their generous support, what we do for these families and children wouldn't be possible. I also want to thank the officers at my department who have worked all year to host fundraisers and raise money for this charity, as well as help in many other ways. They did this without anything in return, and I think Wadesboro can be proud of the officers they have representing, serving and protecting them. We are truly fortunate to have such a great group of men and women in Wadesboro, and to have community partnerships that help build our community as one. Anson County was recently named the #1 charitable county in North Carolina, and this is why."

To learn more about how you can become a part of the Shop with a Cop program please go to www.wadesboropolice.com and submit your inquiry, or contact the department at 704-694-2167 and ask to speak with Sgt. Kris Ray, Sgt. Gerald Cannon or Officer Josh Leviner.

Anson County Woman Wins \$200,000 Lottery Prize

Constance Quick, a resident of Wadesboro, is the latest player to win \$200,000 playing the NC Education Lottery \$ game. She purchased her lucky \$5 ticket at the Anson Mart on East Caswell Street in Wadesboro.

After state and federal taxes were withheld, Quick received a check for \$138,401.

The \$ game, which went on sale October 7, started with four \$200,000 top prizes. As of Monday afternoon, two more top prizes remain to be claimed in the game.

Ticket sales make it possible for the lottery to raise more than half a billion a year to support education programs. North Carolina Education Lottery net proceeds will be used this year to help pay salaries of teachers and teacher assistants, for pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk four-year-olds, school construction and repair, and need-based college scholarships and financial aid.

For details on how \$10.1 million in lottery funds have made a difference in Anson County, click on the "Where the Money Goes" tab on the lottery's website, nc-educationlottery.org.

Christmas Magic at Wadesboro Elementary School

A little Christmas magic happens when a sleigh full of Santa's helpers descend on Wadesboro Elementary School and spend countless hours setting up a Christmas Shoppe for the students, families and friends of the school. All year long this special group of volunteers collect items, some new and some gently used, then use them to create a holiday shopping wonderland. None of the treasures within the store have price tags, instead each shopper chooses their gifts and then pays what they can. Every present is carefully gift wrapped and then the shoppers rush home with their presents.

WES Principal Willie Owens shared, "Yes, shoppers were able to rush home with their gift wrapped items due to the selfless service of our Christmas Shoppe volunteers. As a result of their altruistic efforts, the Shoppe volunteers were also able to promote goodness and improve the quality of life in those who patronized the Shoppe. Finally, the volunteers closed the Shoppe and presented the school with a check and went home for the holidays with a feeling of self-worth and respect."

Each year the proceeds from the Christmas Shoppe are donated to Wadesboro Elementary School. Donations of items for the 2015 Christmas Shoppe will be gladly accepted throughout the year.

Pictured below are, from left, Jean Flake, Sandra Ketchie, Willie Owens and Martel Meachem.



Christmas Decorations are Beautiful, Creative and Peaceful

This year The Express Newspaper held a Christmas decorations contest. Dozens and dozens of entries came in from every corner of the county where we sent our panel of judges to take a look, specifically for beauty and creativity.

Every single entry was a sight to behold! The Express would like to thank those who participated this year. In addition to those who sent in their names or the names of someone they felt worthy of recognition, there were countless homes with spectacular decorations who did not enter.

Congratulations to Juanita Williams at 302 Fifth Street in Lilesville, First Place for the most beautiful Christmas decorations. Her home is pictured above.

Congratulations to Dr. Jenkins Lowery at 20 South Clinton Avenue (at the bridge over Highway 74) in Peachland, First Place for the most creative Christmas decorations. Dr. Jenkins' display is best viewed during the day so you can see the fantastic display of hanging art. Our photo below does not do his work justice!

Everyone is a winner in our eyes, and our hats are off to all of you for your hard work. Thank you for sharing your spectacular displays of beauty, creativity and peace this holiday season.

By Melanie Lyon



Toys for Tots Gratitude Banquet is January 10

Toys for Tots is holding a Gratitude Banquet to thank sponsors and contributors. This event is open to the public, and will feature a delicious meal, entertainment by Holla, and speaker Fred Poisson of the Poisson, Poisson & Bower Law Firm. It will take place on Saturday, January 10 at the Lockhart-Taylor Center beginning at 6 p.m.

Toys for Tots Director Vancine Sturdivant said, "At this point we have supplied toys to over 3,000 kids. Nothing but the grace of God."

Poisson has been practicing law in Anson County for 38 years. He has been actively involved in local outreach with an emphasis on supporting programs that benefit children and literacy. He is board certified in workers' compensation law and has served as State Bar Councilor the past nine years as did his father and grandfather before him. Poisson is managing member of Poisson, Poisson & Bower, PLLC, a full service law firm. He practices law with his daughter Stewart Poisson and son Davis Poisson who are both seventh generation attorneys as well as George Bower, Kelly Dawkins, Whitney Scarborough and Kathryn Scarborough.

Tickets are \$10, and will be available at the door. The event is free for sponsors and contributors. For more information call 704-848-4412.

NC Insurance Commissioner Denies Insurance Companies' Request to Raise Homeowners Rates

NC Insurance Commissioner Wayne Goodwin has ordered a zero percent statewide overall average change in homeowners insurance rates, effective June 1, 2015. The ordered rates vary by geographic territory and type of insurance. On average, homeowners insurance rates are to decrease by 0.3 percent, renter's insurance rates are to increase by 11.2 percent, and condo owner's insurance rates are to increase by 8.1 percent. In Anson County a rate increase of 35% was requested, a rate increase of 13.8% was allowed.

The decision comes after Goodwin held a hearing to examine the insurance companies' request to raise overall average rates by 25.6 percent. During the hearing, experts from the N.C. Rate Bureau, on behalf of the insurance companies, and experts from the N.C. Department of Insurance, representing the interests of the public, presented their cases for and against the rate hikes. It was the first hearing on homeowners insurance rates since 1992.

"The rates I have ordered are the result of the most thorough inspection of North Carolina homeowners insurance rates in more than 20 years," said Goodwin. "After considering all of the evidence and data available, I have determined that no factors or events justified the excessive rates requested by the insurance companies."

Read the full order here: www.ncdoi.com/Media/Documents/12-19-14_HO_Order_Total.pdf. Here is the 2014 Homeowners Insurance Timeline:

- Jan. 3, 2014: The North Carolina Rate Bureau files a request with NCDI to raise homeowners insurance rates.
- Jan. 3-31, 2014: A public comment period is held on the rate filing. NCDI receives more than 10,000 mailed or emailed comments, and approximately 25 people comment in-person.
- Feb. 19, 2014: Goodwin calls for a hearing on the rate request.
- Oct. 20- Nov. 12, 2014: Goodwin conducts hearing on 12 days.
- Dec. 18, 2014: Goodwin orders an overall average rate change of zero percent, effective 6/1/2015.

Auditions for Ansonia's Wizard of Oz

The Ansonia Theatre will be holding auditions for *The Wizard of Oz* on Monday and Tuesday, December 29 and 30, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the theatre, located at 112 South Rutherford Street in Wadesboro. All roles are open. Please prepare a one minute monologue and be prepared to sing.

Those auditioning for Dorothy will be singing *Over the Rainbow*. You are only required to attend one of the audition dates. The show will be directed by Tommy Wooten and runs March 20 to 29.

NAACP Jubilee Day is January 1

The Anson County NAACP invites you to attend their Jubilee Day at Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church in Wadesboro on Thursday, January 1 at 12 noon. Reverend Tony W. Barr will be speaking.

Town of Lilesville Garbage Pickup Schedule for the Holidays

The Town of Lilesville holiday garbage pickup will be on Wednesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 31. All garbage must be out by 8 a.m.

Free Groceries January 7

The Mobile Food Pantry and CMC Mobile Health Unit will be at Morven United Methodist Church (312 East Main Street) on Wednesday, January 7 at 11 a.m. Be sure to bring your own bags, boxes or carts to carry your food. Do not arrive before 9:30 a.m. If it is raining the day of or before the delivery, it will be canceled. If you have not yet done so, bring proof of your income to register. You can only pick up food for yourself and one other registered household.

Interested in volunteering? Call Rev. Larry King at Morven UMC (704) 851-9940 or Rev. Cindy Lunsford at (828) 891-2753.

Do You Need a Coat or Blanket? Would You Like to Donate?

The Faith-Based Center of Hope has begun their "Warm Coats, Warm Hearts" program. They have distributed coats to several of the churches and schools in Anson County.

Blankets for the elderly are also available.

To donate coats and blankets or to request help, please contact Vancine Sturdivant at 704-848-4412