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

Primary Election Unofficial Results

The Primary Election was held on Tuesday, March 3, with Early Voting running from February 13-29. In Anson County 4,629 ballots were cast out of 16,035 registered voters. That was a 28.87% participation rate.

Here are the unofficial results as of Tuesday afternoon, March 10. Winners and runner-up candidates are shown. The names are followed by the Anson County vote total, and state-wide votes are in parenthesis. The winners are in bold.

- Anson County Board of Commissioners District 01 - **Bobby Sikes** 307, Kayesha Nivens 186
- Anson County Board of Commissioners District 03 - **Robert Mims** 383, Ross Streater 357
- Presidential Preference CST - Don Blakenship 3, Charles Kraut 0
- Presidential Preference DEM - **Joseph Biden** 2,077 (568, 580), Bernie Sanders 431 (318, 760)
- Presidential Preference GRE - Howie Hawkins 0 (221)
- Presidential Preference LIB - No votes locally
- Presidential Preference REP - **Donald Trump** 1,147 (747,072), Joe Walsh 13 (16,275)
- US Senate DEM - **Cal Cunningham** 2,334 (713, 230), Erica Smith 639 (434,921)
- US Senate REP - **Thom Tillis** 949 (606,269), Larry Homquist 84 (57,060), (Paul Wright 67 (58,520))
- US House DEM - **Cynthia Wallace** 991 (45,067), Harry Southerland 1,652 (13,128)
- NC Governor DEM - **Roy Cooper** 2,826 (1,120, 158), Ernest Reeves 453 (164,438)
- NC Governor REP - **Dan Forest** 1,091 (694,954), Holly Grange 64 (86,113)
- NC Lieutenant Governor DEM - **Yvonne Lewis Holley** 396 (306,764), Terry Van Duyn 1,500 (235,935)
- NC Lieutenant Governor REP - **Mark Robinson** 447 (239,806), Mark Johnson 200 (88,843), Andy Wells 158 (107,332)
- NC Attorney General REP - **Jim O'Neill** 465 (337,068), Sam Hayes 334 (225,259)
- NC Auditor DEM - **Beth Wood** 2,819 (889,237), Luis Toledo 291 (254,873)
- NC Auditor REP - **Tony Street** 637 (377,330), Tim Hoegemeyer 387 (294,337)
- NC Commissioner of Agriculture DEM - **Jenna Wadsworth** 1,945 (604,749), Walter Smith 859 (341,940)
- NC Commissioner of Insurance REP - **Mike Causey** 666 (446,024), Ronald Pierce 370 (244,555)
- NC Commissioner of Labor REP - **Josh Dobson** 467 (273,094), Chuck Stanley 446 (256,710)
- NC Secretary of State REP - **E. C. Sykes** 453 (295,000), Chad Brown 438 (261,390)
- NC Superintendent of Public Instruction DEM - **Jen Mangrum** 1,601 (375,105), Keith Sutton 502 (301,552)
- NC Superintendent of Public Instruction REP - **Catherine Truitt** 477 (389,967), Craig Horn 564 (298,167)
- NC Treasurer DEM - **Ron Chatterji** 348 (408,339), Dimple Ajmera 1,860 (387,629)



Anson Middle School Martin Luther King Oratorical Event

Anson Middle School held an oratorical event to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Friday, March 6. At the event parents, guests and students were greeted by Leah McLaurin and Maliki Martin. An official welcome was offered by the Principal, Mrs. Danielle Blount, and Naveah Sturdivant. Susan Harrington served as the Mistress of Ceremony for the program. Ms. Tangula Diggs shared the purpose of the program, followed by a brief bio of Dr. King by River Pearson. The students celebrated Dr. King's legacy through poetry. They all did an electrifying and phenomenal job. The students impressively delivered their poems while maintaining poise and engaging the audience.

Mr. John Martin recognized and congratulated all of the students for their outstanding efforts. Certificates and a gift were presented to Cale Melton, Naveah Sturdivant, Andrew Williams, River Pearson, Leah McLaurin, Susan Harrington, Mobin Ali, Maliki Martin and Bethany Smith. A reception followed the program.

Wadesboro Walmart to Close in Early April

News of the Wadesboro Walmart closing spread fast on Wednesday, March 4. In a surprise announcement, Walmart said the store would close on Friday, April 3. It is reported that approximately 200 employees will be impacted by the closing.

• **Wadesboro Mayor Bill Thacker** issued this release on March 4 about Walmart closing: As many in this community are already aware, Walmart has announced that it will be closing the retail facility in Wadesboro effective April 3, 2020. The Wadesboro Town Council and the Town of Wadesboro are equally as shocked and saddened by this news as the public, as we had received no warning of this closure. Our concerns go well beyond the financial and retail impacts that this will have on our community, most importantly the negative consequences that this will have on those employed at the facility, and our sympathy goes out to all those employees and their families that will be affected.

According to their corporate management, the Wadesboro location is one of a group of stores that has consistently underperformed expectations. It is difficult to say why, exactly, that might be. But what we are confident in is that the lack of success of the Wadesboro Walmart is not a reflection of the quality of the employees that worked there or of the citizens of Wadesboro and Anson County.

There is much to be excited for in our community - we are seeing new businesses open and/or relocate here on regular basis; our community arts programs are thriving; jobs are being created and the real estate market has continued growth every year in recent history. We cannot allow this corporate decision to change the course of who we are and what we are working hard to become, now can we allow it to detract from all the positive momentum that is occurring. To be certain this is a heavy blow, but we will recover and we will continue to strive for excellence. On behalf of the Town Council and the Town, I would like to encourage all of our citizens to join us in remaining positive and determined to achieve sustainable prosperity for the Town that we love to call home.

• **The Anson County Chamber of Commerce** issued this release about the closing: As many have heard, Wadesboro Walmart will be closing as of April 3rd. This has come as a shock to the Chamber, Anson Economic Development, and officials. We understand this decision was not made by local management but from Walmart's headquarters in Arkansas.

The Anson County Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Wadesboro Walmart for being a dedicated Chamber member and being a great community partner.

• **John Marek, Executive Director of the Anson County Economic Development Partnership**, issued this release on March 4: As some of you may already have heard, the Wadesboro WalMart will be closing in April. This news came as a complete surprise to public officials, myself included, and the management and employees of the store. The decision was made from Walmart's corporate headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, and was based on the store's lackluster financial performance over an extended time.

We are all aware that the retail landscape is changing. Online purchases from sites such as Amazon now account for more than 15% of annual retail sales and are increasing by 2 or 3 percentage points each year, and conveniently-located deep-discount stores such as Dollar General have undercut the low end of the market. Traditional "brick and mortar" stores are closing at an unprecedented rate and long-time industry leaders such as Sears, Kmart and JCPenney's hover on the brink of bankruptcy.

To date, Walmart, by the sheer scale and ubiquity of its operation, has been largely unscathed by these shifts in the retail environment, but even an industry titan has a bottom line. According to their corporate management, the Wadesboro location is one of a group of stores that has significantly and consistently underperformed expectations. It is difficult to say why, exactly, that might be. We are a relatively small community, population-wise, compared to other places where Walmart has stores. We are also surrounded by larger communities with more diverse shopping options and an excellent road infrastructure which makes it easy to access them. Whatever the reason, I can say with confidence that the lack of success of the Wadesboro location has nothing to do with the quality of management or employees at that store, or of the quality of the Wadesboro community, as a whole.

Some people with pre-conceived notions about our town will undoubtedly use this unfortunate situation as an echo chamber for their own specific gripes. We will not allow these naysayers to detract from the tremendous strides we have made over the past few years: New companies coming in and creating jobs; A burgeoning arts scene; A solid increase in wages; A strong housing market; And an influx of new, dedicated and involved citizens. The closing of the Walmart is certainly not a positive thing, neither is it the end of the world. Moving forward, my office will be working with Walmart corporate real estate to determine the best and highest use of the existing building. Perhaps that will be another retail store, or maybe it will be an industrial or even public service use. We will also be working closely with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the new Roses store and to see if there are opportunities for local entrepreneurs to open businesses which fill the gap. Maybe it's time for a downtown clothing, shoe or sporting goods store.

We will also be working with South Piedmont Community College and our NCWorks office to assist the displaced employees in retraining, resetting and finding new jobs.

The thing that we cannot do is allow this unfortunate corporate decision made 1,000 miles away by people who have probably never even been to Wadesboro to detract from the positive things we have achieved or to deflect us from our ultimate mission, achieving sustainable prosperity for all the residents of Anson County.

Parks & Recreation Spring Registration

Anson County Parks & Recreation Spring Registration is taking place now. They are offering these sports:

Tee Ball Ages 4-6 **Coach Pitch** Ages 7-8 **Minor Baseball** Ages 9-10
Major Baseball Ages 11-12. **Girls Softball** Ages 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15.
Micro Soccer Ages 3-4 **Youth Soccer** Grades: K-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-9, 10-12

The cost for these programs is \$25. You may come to the Parks & Recreation office at Little Park (845 Airport Road) to register Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or you can also go to their website at www.co.anson.nc.us and fill out a registration form and send it by email or text.

For more information, contact Jeff Waisner at (704) 695-2550 or jwaisner@co.anson.nc.us, Wendell Small (704) 695-2782 or wsmall@co.anson.nc.us, and Allen Jackson II (704) 694-5751 or ajackson@co.anson.nc.us.

Annual 4-H Clover Crawl is Friday

Don't push your luck! Purchase your tickets or table today! The 4-H Clover Crawl event is coming this Friday, March 13, and it is always an evening of fun, food, dancing and great socializing!

The Clover Crawl is an adult event that is an important fundraiser for the Anson County 4-H program. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served. The cost is \$40 per person in advance, and funds raised will be used to support ongoing 4-H youth programs in Anson County. Tables are also available for \$400, which includes eight tickets with reserved seating. Tickets can be purchased at the N.C. Cooperative Extension of Anson County office, located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro or at Lacy's in uptown Wadesboro.

The Clover Crawl takes place at the Lockhart-Taylor Center in Wadesboro, in the Ingram Room, from 6 to 11 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by DJ Dean. Come out, meet up with friends, eat, dance, make this event a success and enjoy!

For more information call Extension office at 704-694-2915.

Middle and High School Parent - Teacher Conferences are March 12

All Anson high schools and Anson Middle School will hold Parent-Teacher Conferences this Thursday, March 12, from 2 to 7 p.m.

Parents and guardians are urged to join their student's school on this special day. You will have a chance to find out how your child is doing in school, and what you can do to partner with your child's teacher to make sure your child has a successful time this school year.

Gigantic Book Sale at the Library!

The Friends of the Library are sponsoring a gigantic book sale at the Hampton B. Allen Library next week. The sale will run from Monday through Friday, March 16-20, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 to 3 p.m.

Hardback books cost only 50¢, and paperbacks are only 25¢! If you choose to purchase a "Friends of the Library Bag" you can fill it up with books for \$10. This is a great deal!

For more information you can call the library at 704-694-5177. Please come out and support the library.

Anson County Has New YouTube Channel

The YouTube channel that broadcasts the Anson County Board of Commissioner meetings has changed. All meetings from the old YouTube channel will be migrated to the new channel. It will take some time to have this completed. All meetings will be listed by date as they are moved to the new channel.

To locate the channel go to YouTube.com and search for: "Anson County Government."

The "Live Broadcast" link on the Anson County homepage (www.co.anson.nc.us) has been updated to the new channel as well.

Storytime Every Tuesday at the Library

The Hampton B. Allen Library features Storytime for children every Tuesday at 10 a.m. This program is free and an enjoyable learning experience for children.

For more information call 704-694-5177.

Upcoming Grace Senior Center Events

Open to the community, all events and activities for seniors 55 and older.

- Tuesday, March 17 movie, *Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont*, 2:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, March 31 Senior Citizen Prom, 12 noon to 3 p.m. Refreshments will be served. Call to register 704-694-6616.
- Tuesday, May 12 Anson Wellness Expo. Refreshments will be served. Call to register 704-694-6616.

Democratic Party Precinct Meeting is March 14

All Anson County Precinct Officers and interested citizens are invited to attend the annual Anson County Democratic Party Precinct Meeting. It will be held on Saturday, March 14 at 10 a.m. at the Hampton B. Allen Library, located at 120 South Greene Street in uptown Wadesboro.

For additional information contact Dannie Montgomery, Democratic Party Chair, at 704-694-8326. Information about the North Carolina Democratic Party is available at ncdp.org.

Author Sandy Bruney to Speak at Brown Bag Book Club Meeting

The Hampton B. Allen Library announces the Brown Bag Book Club meeting for Monday, March 16 at 12:00 noon in the Pritchett room. Local author Sandy Bruney will be the guest. Sandy will be sharing about her new book, *Morven*. Everyone is invited to come, bring a covered dish and support our local author.

Any questions please call 704-694-5177.

Board Meeting

The Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation District monthly board meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 17 at 10:00 a.m. at the BCSWCD office, located at 1758 Morven Road in Wadesboro. For more information call 704-694-3516.

The Express is on the web at www.TheExpressNewspaper.com