

THE EXPRESS

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

Three Anson County Men Arrested for Dealing Cocaine and Meth

Cliff Martin, Jr., Michael Faulkenberry and Timothy Bowens charged with distributing cocaine and meth



Cliff Martin, Jr.



Michael Faulkenberry



Timothy Bowens

On Wednesday, September 27 agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation filed a criminal complaint in district court after arresting well known Polkton businessman Cliff Martin, Jr. along with two other men, Michael Faulkenberry and Timothy Bowens, on drug charges. The men have been charged with buying and selling cocaine and methamphetamine.

The FBI has classified this as a major investigation into the drug operation which was based at 15 West Polk Street in Polkton, in close proximity to the Polkton Police Department and a church. The address is the location of Martin's business office.

The FBI described Martin as the 'mastermind' of the drug ring. The complaint stated that the investigation began in early 2015 after the FBI had contact with a confidential source who came forward about alleged drug deals.

According to the complaint, the source told agents that he sold Martin cocaine in half ounce or whole ounce quantities once or twice a week. The source said that Martin also purchased "ice" methamphetamine at least three times in quarter ounce quantities. Agents said they attempted to investigate Martin at that time with 'negative results.'

According to the complaint, investigators got a wiretap for Martin's phone in June 2016 and it revealed communications with several people, including Faulkenberry and Bowens, involving multiple transactions where Martin allegedly bought and sold cocaine.

The complaint also stated that in November 2016 the FBI developed a second confidential source who told investigators that Martin was 'a kilogram-level dealer and Faulkenberry was his runner.' That source was used to buy drugs at 15 West Polk Street numerous times.

In June 2017 the FBI was authorized to intercept Faulkenberry's phone conversations, resulting in recordings of numerous drug transactions.

In July 2017 the FBI was authorized to intercept Martin's cell phone communications, also resulting in recordings of numerous drug transactions. The complaint states that Martin referred to the drugs in terms such as "7 quarts of oil," "cake," "7 pieces of wood," "8 ball" and a "whole one." The FBI stated that they believe the "7" refers to \$700 or half an ounce of cocaine, and that a "whole one" may be referring to an ounce of cocaine, or even a kilogram of cocaine (2.2 pounds), which is valued between \$32,000 and \$38,000 according to Faulkenberry in an intercepted phone call.

Martin was approached by FBI agents on Monday, September 25 and told about the investigation. He agreed to make drug buys from two of his suppliers using FBI funds, one of whom was Bowens. The next day, on September 26, Bowens was picked up by the FBI, and he confessed to selling cocaine to Martin over the past year, including an ounce the night before.

According to an area news outlet, Polkton Police Chief Matthew Norris said Martin and Faulkenberry have been known to officers for some time. "Cliff and Michael have been a cancer on this community for a number of years and it's about time they got a dose of their own medicine," Norris said.

The three men are charged with conspiracy to possess and distribute Schedule I and II substances, and possession with the intent to distribute Schedule I and II controlled substances. They were ordered to be held without bond, with a first court hearing on Monday, October 2. As of press time, the results of that court hearing are not known. The men face 10 years to life in prison and fines in excess of \$10 million.

Polkton Man Arrested in Child Predator Bust in Lincoln County

Michael Lee Williams of Polkton was charged with soliciting a minor for sex along with five other men in Lincoln County, NC according to a September 12 release from the Lincoln County Police Department. The six men were arrested for allegedly attempting to have an 'unlawful sexual relationship' according to police.

The arrests took place when the men arrived at a predetermined location that had been set up by undercover detectives posing as minors on social media. These arrests were the culmination of a two month investigation.

Police released this statement Tuesday: Parents are strongly encouraged to go through each follower and friend on their child's social media account and make sure your child knows them. If not, that person needs to be deleted. Parents must also be extremely cautious of fake and cloned profiles of people on social media. Parents must also be aware of what their child is doing on their smart phones and tablets.

The six men were each taken to the Lincoln County Jail.

- Robert Richard Quigg, of Valdese, was charged with two counts of soliciting a minor for sex and appearing. Police say Quigg was already listed as a registered sex offender. He was given a \$100,000 bond.

- Loy Everette Huckle, of Dallas, was charged with one count of soliciting a minor for sex and appearing and one count of disseminating obscene material to a minor.

- Devin Cole Mayberry, of Statesville, was charged with one count of soliciting a minor for sex and appearing.

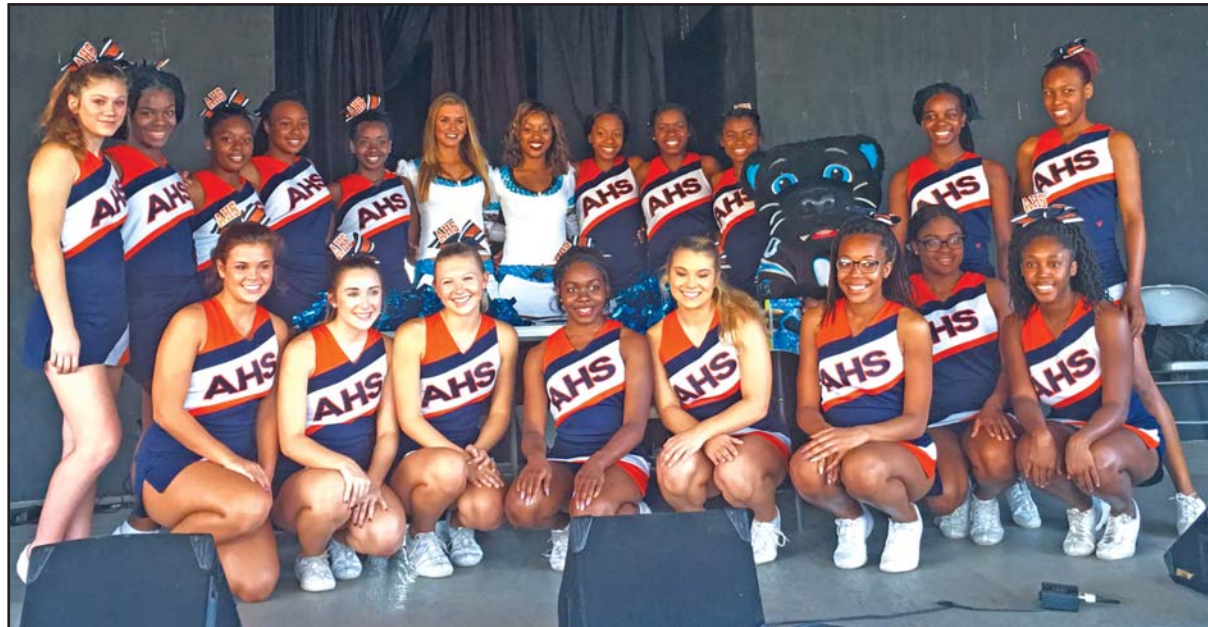
- Timothy Harold Purley, of Newton, was charged with soliciting a minor for sex and appearing. He was given a \$25,000 bond.

- Michael Lee Williams, of Polkton, was charged with soliciting a minor for sex and appearing. He was given a \$25,000 bond.

- James Frederick Turner, of Charlotte, was charged with two counts of soliciting a minor and appearing for sex and two counts of second-degree sexual exploitation of a minor.

Participants Sought for Veterans Day Events

Anyone who would like to participate in the Veteran's Day Celebration is asked to please meet at the Anson County Government Center, Commissioners' Board Room, located at 101 South Greene Street in Wadesboro, this Thursday, October 5 at 2:00 p.m. Info DCannon@co.anson.nc.us.



Anson High School Cheerleaders Compete in Cheerleading Competition

The Anson High School Varsity Cheerleaders competed in the Third Annual American Legion Post 76 Cheerleading Competition at the Stanly County Fair on Tuesday, September 26. The girls placed 3rd out of five teams in the Varsity Division, and were awarded a \$200 prize for their efforts. The team is coached by Courtney Suggs.

Wadesboro Housing Authority Receives Award

Wadesboro Housing Authority under the direction of Mrs. Betty Huntley received a prestigious and well deserved award recently. The agency received the Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) High Performance Award on Tuesday, August 22 at the Carolinas Council of Housing Redevelopment & Codes Officials (CCHRCO) Annual Conference at Myrtle Beach, SC. The award is based on 14 key indicators which include; Administrative, Performance, Quality Inspections and in compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Wadesboro Housing Authority, along with other Housing Authorities in the North Carolina District, was nominated by the Department Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in Greensboro for this award.

"A stable home is at the center of our lives," said Executive Director Betty Huntley. "A home isn't just a building or shelter, it is where your family and loved-ones live, which makes your home complete. Wadesboro Housing Authority goal is to provide quality housing in a safe and decent environment to families throughout the County."

Currently the Wadesboro Housing Authority is providing Section 8 assistance for 110 families throughout Anson County.

Huntley concluded by saying, "We received this award thanks to the hard work by our dedicated staff at Wadesboro Housing Authority."



Wadesboro Housing Authority Director Betty Huntley.

Peachland Man Arrested After Two State Pursuit

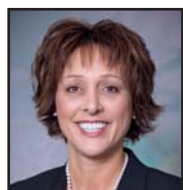
Darlington County, South Carolina law enforcement officers arrested an Anson County man in Society Hill, SC after a chase that covered three counties in North and South Carolina. Law enforcement officers from several agencies were involved in the pursuit and manhunt for Ronald Alan Wittig, 20, of Peachland.

According to reports, the chase began in the afternoon on Friday, September 29 in Richmond County, NC. Law enforcement officers pursued Wittig south through Bennettsville, SC and Marlboro County, then into Darlington County. Wittig stopped his vehicle at the boat landing in Society Hill, got out and ran into the woods. After a manhunt involving officers and K9 units, Wittig was found on Williamson Street in Society Hill and arrested at about 6 p.m. on Friday.

A release from the Darlington County Sheriff's Office stated that Sheriff Tony Chavis and several of his deputies with the assistance of the Marlboro County Sheriff's Office, the Florence County Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit and K9 Unit, the Bennettsville Police Department, the Society Hill Police Department, the Lake City Police Department K9 Unit, and the Department of Natural Resources captured Wittig and took him into custody.

Wittig was wanted in North Carolina for multiple felony warrants. He now faces new charges related to this incident.

Dr. Maria Pharr to be Installed as Fourth President of SPCC



At an Installation Ceremony this Friday, October 6, South Piedmont Community College and its Board of Trustees will officially welcome Dr. Maria A. Pharr as the college's fourth President. The invitation only event will begin at 3 p.m. in Building A on the Old Charlotte Highway Campus (4209 Old Charlotte Hwy., Monroe) followed by a reception honoring Dr. Pharr and celebrating the future of South Piedmont Community College.

Anson's August Unemployment Rate Remained a Low 5.3%

Anson County's unemployment rate continued at a low number for August, 5.3%, the same rate as July. Statewide the unemployment rate was 4.5% in August, also the same as July.

Anson's total labor force in August was 10,261. Of that number 9,716 were employed and 545 were unemployed. In July the total labor force was 10,386 with 9,837 employed and 549 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) increased in 26 of North Carolina's counties in August, decreased in 25, and remained unchanged in 49. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 7.7 percent, while Buncombe County had the lowest at 3.4 percent.

One of the state's metro areas experienced a rate increase, three experienced decreases, and 11 remained unchanged. Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount at 6.6 percent had the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 3.7 percent. The August not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 4.5 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased all 100 counties. All fifteen metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in August by 49,310 to 4,685,972, while those unemployed decreased 2,281 to 218,650. Since August 2016, the number of workers employed statewide increased 74,052, while those unemployed decreased 36,937.

Morven's October Festival is Saturday

The annual Morven October Festival will be held this Saturday, October 7. The event will take place in downtown Morven, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. This will be a day of fun for everyone that includes delicious food, a variety of live music, the big parade, games for the whole family, activities for the children like face painting, gospel singing...and so much more! This year's event promises to be great day!

Vendor spaces are still available. If you are interested in being a vendor you go to Morven Town Hall (301 East Main Street) or call 704-851-9321.

If you would like to be in the parade, participate as a performer or volunteer go by Morven Town Hall or call 704-851-9321.

Early Release for Students for Parent/Teacher Conferences on Thursday

Anson County students will be released from school early tomorrow, Thursday, October 5, for Parent / Teacher Conferences.

Here is the schedule:

- Elementary schools will dismiss at 12:30 p.m. Elementary school conferences will be held from 1 to 6 p.m.
- Middle and high schools will dismiss at 1:30 p.m. Middle and high school conferences will be held from 2 to 7 p.m.

Gulledge Fire Department BBQ is this Saturday

Gulledge Fire Department is holding their annual Fall BBQ this Saturday, October 7, from 11 a.m. until they run out. They will offer their delicious chicken or pork, served with baked beans, slaw, rolls, homemade desserts and a drink - all for only \$9 a plate! They also offer cartons, warm or cold.

Gulledge Fire Department is located at the intersection of Dickie Little Road and Gulledge Road. From Wadesboro, take Highway 109 south, past Rayfields Meat Center. Turn left on the next paved road (Dickie Little Road). Follow it all the way to the Fire Department.

Gulledge VFD offers fire, rescue, medical, and emergency services and provides fire prevention education and building inspections. It is a not-for-profit volunteer fire department funded in part by Anson County taxes, plus donations and money raised at the annual BBQs in October and March. They serve the Gulledge community of Anson County 24 hours a day / 7 days a week / 365 days a year.

Toys for Tots Kick Off is Sunday

The official Toys for Tots Kick-off for this Christmas season will be held on Sunday, October 8 at Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church, located on Cairo Road in Morven at 11:00 a.m. All Anson citizens are invited to please come.

Vancine Sturdivant, Director of the Toys for Tots program said, "We are looking forward to a great year of blessing others."

If you would like more information or would like to donate or participate with Toys for Tots, please call Vancine at 704-848-4412.