

Nearly 600 Attend Annual Christmas Event at Harvest Ministries on December 20

On Sunday December 20 nearly 600 people packed the auditorium of Harvest Ministries Outreach Center to take part in the annual Community Christmas Blessing.

Lead Pastor Steve Adams said, "This event is now in its thirteenth year, and every year gets better and better."

"To be able to bless hundreds of children and families truly shows the spirit of Christmas," Founder of HMOC, Pastor Tim Adams



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added. "This is great, the hundreds of gifts under the tree, the community officials, politicians and others who took their money, their time and their compassion to serve others shows that Anson County cares about each other, and that we know the real reason of this season."

To top off the event, a few members of the crowd had the opportunity to play "Let's Make a Christmas Deal," where Adams and the congregation gave out prizes and hundreds of dollars in cash. Prizes included a new television, \$300 in cash, Charlotte Hornets tickets, new bicycles, and a computer tablet.

Steve Adams said, "Harvest Ministries Outreach Center would like to thank the many volunteers, organizers, community partners, churches and others who made this year's event possible. A special thanks to: Leavitt Funeral Home, Brasingtons, Commissioner Anna Baucom, C&M Auto, Forbes Jewelers, Badcock of Wadesboro, Commissioner Harold Smith, Martin Furniture, Wadesboro Lumber, Tractor Supply, Quick Shop - Tapan Kumar, Sheriff Landric Reid, and Lady Bug Restaurant."

"I would like to especially thank Commissioner Vance Sturdivant and Toys for Tots for their support and partnership to reach the citizens of Anson County. The Congregation of HMOC for your dedication, compassion, and desire to reach others!"

"A special thank you goes out to Poisson Poisson and Bower Law Offices for being the Key Sponsor of this year's Community Christmas Blessing, along with The Express Newspaper."

Pastor Steve summed up the event by saying, "A huge crowd is great, the presents for children are wonderful, and people loving and blessing others is truly what Christmas is supposed to be."

And to know that 40 people prayed to have Jesus Christ change their life simply was the exclamation point on an awesome day!"

For more information on the programs and outreach efforts of Harvest visit www.harvestmin.com or call Adams at 704-695-2879.

Clean Water Trust Fund Protects Military Operations with Property Purchases

The U.S. military's ability to sustain its training mission in North Carolina received a significant boost after the North Carolina Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) approved grants to acquire more than 6,300 acres of property or property rights around installations and beneath military flight paths.

In addition to its responsibilities to protect the state's drinking water sources and natural and cultural heritage, the Trust Fund is tasked with buffering military installations and training areas from development that could bring training to a halt - and possibly threaten the very existence of a base.

Governor Pat McCrory said these purchases were in keeping with his administration's goals protecting the military's operational capacity in North Carolina.

"These grants are to protect and support the U.S. military mission at ranges and bases throughout North Carolina," McCrory said. "Working together with the military

and with land trusts is critical to preserving North Carolina's history of being the most military-supportive state in the nation. These purchases strengthen tradition."

The 2015 state funding of nearly \$3.5M in CWMTF monies will be paired with more than \$7.3M in federal matching dollars.

Nonprofit groups, such as local and regional land trusts, will add another \$3.1M to the total amount used for the purchases.

"Residential housing near an artillery range, or a cell tower close to a flight path are a couple of examples that come to mind," said CWMTF Executive Director Bryan Gossage. "These investments, which often have a great environmental protection aspect too, will help ensure our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines can continue to train by reducing potential conflicts with incompatible uses."

In deciding among more than a hundred applications for funds, CWMTF trustees approved projects with a military mission-protection component in Brunswick, Hyde, Onslow, Moore, Scotland, Wayne and Durham counties. In doing so, the expenditures will protect training areas for the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps., and NC National Guard - every service with a major presence in North Carolina.

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