



THRIFT STORE PAYS OFF STUDENTS' CAFETERIA DEBT — The New Life Thrift Store, located at 8935 NC Hwy. 127, partnered with West Alexander Middle School to pay off any cafeteria debt owed by students at the end of the 2025-26 school year. This was a tremendous help to the Alexander County Schools Nutrition Department and the administration at WAMS and at Central Services expressed their deepest appreciation for this gesture. Pictured above, from left to right, are: ACS School Superintendent Dr. Bill Griffin, New Life Thrift Store Co-Director Holly Campbell, and WAMS Principal Dr. Amy Daigle.

WAMS Cafeteria bills have been paid

By ANGELA FARR KING

At the end of every school year when payment is required for lunches and/or breakfasts, there are some cafeteria bills that are simply left unpaid by families. Sometimes there is probably a legitimate reason these are not paid. Sometimes parents neglect to take care of their students' bills. Reminders are sent repeatedly and the bills are simply not paid.

This can create a deficit for the Nutrition Department of Alexander County Schools. This past school year, middle and high school students were required to pay for lunches and breakfasts unless they qualified for free lunches. This meant that some students incurred cafeteria debts that were not paid, leaving the ACS Nutrition

Department with some cafeteria balances in the negative.

The New Life Thrift Store, located at 8935 NC 127 S. in the Bethlehem Community, is a mission minded thrift store who gives back to their community. They paid the cafeteria debt for any bills owed by students at West Alexander Middle School at the end of the 2025-26

school year. They don't ask for reasons why bills aren't paid. They simply pay them. This is just one of the ways this little thrift store gives back to their community. They also give to the Mt. Pisgah Church food pantry, the local Ministerial Benevolent office, the Caring Hearts Pregnancy Center, Early Head Start, and Bethlehem Branch Library.

COUNTRYTOWN

TIRE & AUTO SERVICES CENTER
125 8th St. Dr. SE
(LR Blvd.) Hickory
Complete Auto Service

828-324-0051
BFGoodrich

UNIROYAL
MICHELIN



HARVEST FROM THEIR FARM — Campbell's Berry Farm owners Tracy and Holly Campbell work year round to help their blueberry bushes (inset) thrive and this is the time to go see them to pick some of their delicious berries. They also have a quaint general store on their farm where customers can purchase a variety of freshly grown produce. Visiting the farm is a fun day trip for families or groups in Alexander County.

It's Peak Season for Berry Picking

By ANGELA FARR KING

It's peak season for berry picking at Campbell's Berry Farm, located at 27 Tracy Bolick Lane in the Bethlehem Community. There are 3,000 bushes on the farm and they are hanging full of delicious blue goodness. One picker coming out of the field was carrying two gallon buckets full. He said he washes his and lays them on cookie sheets to dry. He then stores them in Mason jars in his freezer and uses them all year in smoothies and on oatmeal for breakfast. He makes sure to pick enough to last his family until the next blueberry season.

Visiting Campbell's Berry Farm is like taking

a step back in time. They have relaxing places to sit in the shade when not picking berries. They have lots of delicious fresh produce to purchase in their old time general store and yummy ice cream as well. Everything is grown on their farm and they keep bees there to help pollinate all of their plants.

Co-owner Holly Campbell said they have several field trips planned for next week. When school or preschool groups come, the Campbells include an educational component about how bees help pollinate the plants and the life cycle of plants. Students get to pick their own berries, enjoy picnic lunches under the shelter, have story time

with Holly, and get scoops of ice cream from the general store. This is all included in a \$10 field trip fee, which is a bargain for all of that fun and education.

This is the perfect time for families or individuals to visit Campbell's Berry Farm to take advantage of the blueberries that Tracy and Holly Campbell work all year to cultivate. They will also have berries picked for their customers who don't want to (or aren't able to) pick in the heat.

Their operating hours are Monday - Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Sundays from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. For more information about what this beautiful farm has to offer, call 828-598-0707.

FREE ESTIMATES

- Grading
- Underground Retention
- Erosion Control
- Clearing
- Roads / Driveways
- Foundations

**SIEMER**
GRADING & EXCAVATING
828-303-0848
Exceeding Expectations Since 2014

siemergrading@gmail.com • siemergrading.com



Built on Heart, Fueled by Community

Come join our family-friendly, welcoming atmosphere

Live Music Friday and Saturday Nights
Music Singo every Wednesday
Check our facebook page for weekly events and daily specials.

Twin Brother's at PLAYER'S RIDGE
1159 Players Ridge Rd
Hickory, NC 28601

**SCHOOL SUPPLY BLESSING**

Helping Students Start the School Year Prepared

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2026 - 5-7 PM

- Free School Supplies for local community students
- Hot Dogs for each family

7500 NC 127, Taylorsville NC 28681



COMPLETE EYE EXAMS

Our basic eye exam includes test for:

- Visual Acuity (Near and Far)
- Glaucoma, Cataracts, and other Ocular Pathology
- Refraction for Glasses or contacts
- Visual Field Screening
- Ocular Motility
- Muscle Posture
- Convergence
- Color Vision
- Depth Perception
- And Other Test (all on an as needed basis)



Michael Sigmon, OD • Elizabeth York, OD • Donald York, OD

Vision First
OPTOMETRY
828-495-1234
EXPANDED HOURS
174 Bolick Lane, Suite 201, Taylorsville, NC 28681

Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 am - 5:30 pm

NEW PATIENTS ACCEPTED

Welcoming New Patients in Taylorsville!

Catawba Valley Family Medicine—Taylorsville is ready to see new patients of all ages with the help of our newest providers, April Phares and Sandi Reed, both Certified Family Nurse Practitioners. Well or sick visits are welcomed. Visit our website or call to learn more about how we can be your first line of defense in guarding your most valuable possession of all: *your health*.

50 Macedonia Church Rd., Suite A Taylorsville, NC 28681
Phone: (828) 732-5300



CatawbaValleyHealth.org/Taylorsville



April Phares, FNP



Sandi Reed, FNP