WINNING SMILES — Vaness Brooks, the 2018 Celebrate Community Adult Volunteer of the Year, and Taylor Wallace, the 2018 Celebrate Community Youth Volunteer of the Year, pose with their plaques Tuesday night.

Brooks, Wallace honored for community volunteer efforts

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ASHEBORO — Taylor Wallace and Vanessa Brooks were the big winners Tuesday evening during The Courier-Tribune’s Celebrate Community Gala at 105Worth Event Center. Wallace was named Youth Volunteer of the Year while Brooks took home Adult Volunteer of the Year honors.

“I’m very humbled,” Wallace said afterward. “I’m very excited, very humbled and inspired by the other volunteers. This is something I can celebrate with my family and friends.”

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Gala
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“I’m surprised,” Brooks said after having her photo taken. “I feel really good. It old them I was just coming out is they give back for the fellowship and church. They make a difference.”

Wallace
In revealing the youth winner, Jordan asked, “Have you ever seen a young person who is always smiling, never idle and exudes the love of Jesus? If so, then you’ve likely seen the winner of our Youth Volunteer of the Year.”

The Courier-Tribune, said volunteers “contribute to a stronger community. What stands out is they give back to the community.”

The selection process, he said, is difficult but the Celebrate Community Committee helps out. “Thanks to the honorees for all you do and will do,” Mauney said.

Asheboro Mayor David Smith said one of the things that makes the city a great place to live is the quality of life. “Without volunteers, Asheboro would not be the good place to live in it is. The city is proud to sponsor this event that recognizes people who make a difference.”

Todd Benz, general manager of The Courier-Tribune, echoed those words, saying, “What makes this place special is volunteers.” He then named the 12 nominees. Annette Jordan, editor of The Courier-Tribune, announced those receiving the Volunteer of the Year Awards, insisting that all the nominees were winners. The nominees also included Nancy Brown, Sarah Beth Campbell, Sam Heath, Mike Key, Antonio McDowell, Greg Patton, Rose Rook, Susan Scott, Margie Stidham and Ann Trogdon.

Wallace
In revealing the youth winner, Jordan asked, “Have you ever seen a young person who is always smiling, never idle and exudes the love of Jesus? If so, then you’ve likely seen the winner of our Youth Volunteer of the Year.”

A junior at Randolph Early College High School, Wallace is active at school and at Cross Road Baptist Church where she sings in the Adult Choir, plays guitar for the Praise Band and leads the Youth Praise Band. She also assists with the M&Ms (Music and Missions) which features the church’s younger kids. She teaches them their speaking parts, songs and motions for the Christmas plays, and in the summer helps them prepare songs and perform for the residents of the Cross Road Retirement Community.

Wallace’s favorite time of the church year is Vacation Bible School. She plans months in advance by practicing the songs and working with other youth in preparation of leading all VBS participants in song. When the VBS director of High Pines Wesleyan Church in Asheboro sought help to lead their youngsters in song, she immediately volunteered.

She is just as busy volunteering at RECHS while maintaining a GPA of over 4.8. Soon after school began, she was approached by a school employee who asked if she would consider tutoring a student who needed additional guidance in math. Enjoying mathematics and wanting to be a future educator, she eagerly volunteered and is already enjoying seeing the fruits of her labor when the other student received better grades and expressed gratitude for her assistance.

Wallace serves as the Student Government Association vice president and is active in the Beta Club. Each fall, she volunteers for community events such as the Big Sweep in Randleman and the N.C. Zoo’s Boo at the Zoo. In the spring, she raises money for the Baby Bottle Campaign for Your Choices Randolph and collects money for Pennies for Patients.

At school, Wallace leads fellow students in the school’s Students for Christ club. She prepares for and leads Bible study meetings, provides snacks and prays for the needs requests as shared by fellow members.

Wallace is also working on her Gold Award with the Girl Scouts.

Brooks
Brooks served students in the Asheboro City Schools district as a classroom teacher for over 25 years and has recently joined the ACS team to serve as the district’s family engagement and volunteer services coordinator.

She has been instrumental in helping school leaders deepen family engagement through the Academic Family Teacher Team meetings and she serves as the contact person for individuals looking to volunteer in ACS schools. She has also led the charge in engaging faith-based partners to represent on Superintendent Dr. Terry Worrell’s Faith-Based Advisory Council.

Active on the district’s Equity Team, she helps to shepherd relationships with various volunteer organizations in our community.

In addition, Brooks is a member of the board of directors for the Asheboro Central Boys & Girls Club and for the George Washington Carver Community Enrichment Center in Asheboro. She chairs the St. Luke’s United Methodist Women group, which focuses on improving the lives of women and children in Asheboro and throughout Randolph County.

She is a member of the St. Luke’s United Methodist Gospel Choir and volunteers with the Village of Barnabas, an organization whose purpose is to mentor and improve the lives of young people.

In addition, Brooks has chaired school supply drives, coordinated church meals, acted as liturgist when needed and chaired fundraising efforts. She is currently working on a committee to celebrate the 150th anniversary of her church, St. Luke’s United Methodist Church. Through St. Luke’s, Brooks has been involved in activities bringing awareness to human trafficking and cancer awareness.

The Courier-Tribune will include a special Celebrate Community publication featuring all of the nominees and winners in its Feb. 24 edition.

Obits
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Jerry W. Culler
TRINITY — Jerry Wade Culler, 49, of Trinity died Saturday, Feb. 9, 2019, at High Point Regional Hospital.

Mr. Culler was born Sept. 26, 1969, the son of Darrell and Lois Holder Culler. Jerry was a native of High Point, liked to garden and enjoyed his friends.

He is survived by son, Austin Wade Culler of Florida; mother and step-father, Lois and Kenneth Tesh Jr. of Asheboro, N.C.; step-brothers, Dakota Wright of Asheboro, N.C., Ayaj Wright of New York, Bobby Wright Jr. of Florida and Duane Tesh; and step-sisters, Paula Varner of Asheboro, N.C., and Billie Jo Merritt of King, N.C.

The family will receive friends Thursday, Feb. 14, from 6-8 p.m. at Pugh Funeral Home, 437 Sunset Ave., Asheboro, N.C.

The funeral will be Friday, Feb. 15, at 11 a.m. at Landmark Baptist Church, 2816 Spoons Chapel Road, Asheboro, with the Rev. Frank Barrett officiating. Entombment will follow in Randolph Memorial Park, Asheboro.

Condolences may be made at www.pughfuneralhome.com.