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

Anson County's Unemployment Rate a Low 5.5% in November

Anson County's unemployment rate continued to be low during November. In November it was 5.5%, unchanged from October. The actual labor force, employed and unemployed numbers for October and November were almost identical. Statewide the unemployment rate in November was 4.8%, down only slight from October's 4.9%.

Anson's total labor force in November was 10,892. Of that number 10,296 were employed and 596 were unemployed. In October the total labor force was 10,904, with 10,299 employed and 605 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) increased in 66 of North Carolina's counties in November, decreased in 23, and remained unchanged in 11. Hyde County had the highest unemployment rate at 9.4 percent, while Buncombe County and Orange County each had the lowest at 3.7 percent. Six of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases, five decreased, and four remained unchanged.

Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount at 6.8 percent experienced the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 3.9 percent. The November not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 4.8 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased in 98 counties, increased in one, and remained unchanged in one. Fourteen metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year and one remained unchanged.


The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in November by 2,112 to 4,661,632, while those unemployed decreased 2,412 to 234,214. Since November 2015, the number of workers employed statewide increased 137,505, while those unemployed decreased 25,723.

Bridge Replacement Project in Anson

The N.C. Department of Transportation stated that they would begin a project to replace the bridge over Big Branch Cribbs Creek on Burnsville Church Road north of Burnsville on Monday, January 23, weather permitting.

While crews replace the existing structure, motorists will be detoured along Rocky Mount Church Road, Wightman Church Road, and NC 742 back to Burnsville Church Road. The project is scheduled to be completed by May 26, 2017. For real-time travel information visit DriveNC.gov or follow NCDOT on Twitter.

Anson County Relay For Life Kickoff is Thursday on the Square



The American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Anson will host a community kickoff this Thursday, January 26 at 5:30 p.m. on the Wadesboro Town Square. Everyone is invited to join the festivities and learn about how to help the American Cancer Society save more lives from cancer.

The event will celebrate and honor local cancer survivors, patients and caregivers, and showcase how funds raised benefit the local community. Rocky River Baptist Church Children's Choir will perform. Guests will have the opportunity to register a team for the Relay For Life event, which will be held on Friday, May 19 at Anson High School.

The Relay For Life movement is the world's largest fundraising event to save lives from cancer. Uniting communities across the globe, we celebrate people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and take action for lifesaving change. During Relay For Life events, members of each team take turns walking or running around the track or path. Teams participate in fundraising in the months leading up to the event.

"This is our community's opportunity to help save lives from cancer by taking action to move us closer to a world free from the pain and suffering of cancer," said Amy Turner, member of the local planning committee. "Funds raised from our event helps the American Cancer Society provide free information and support for people facing cancer, and funds cancer research that will help protect future generations."

Visit RelayForLife.org/ansonnc to learn more about the event, or contact Cameron Whitley at 704-552-6147 or Cameron.whitley@cancer.org.

Board of Education Meets January 30

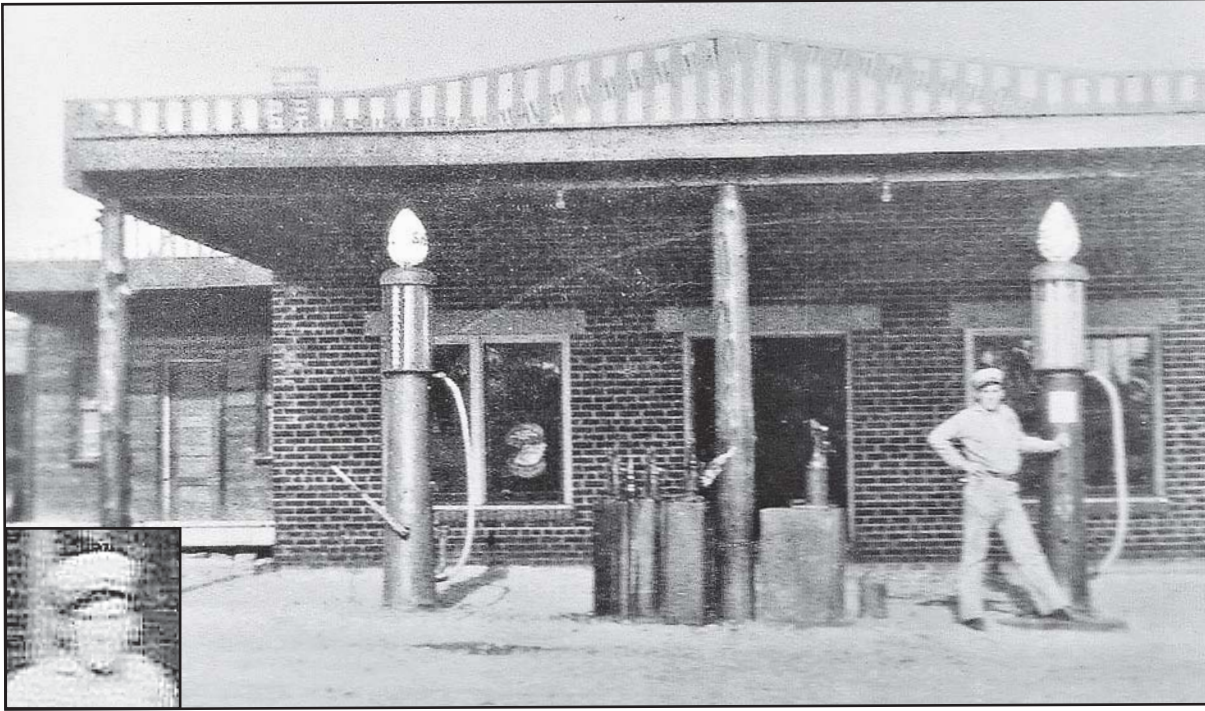
The regular Board of Education meeting will be held on Monday, January 30 at the Board of Education Office (Charles Riddle Staff Development Center). The meeting will open at 5:30 p.m. with Closed Session immediately following the opening of the meeting. Open Session begins at 6:30 p.m.

February is Heart Health Month

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions. Communities, health professionals, and families can work together to create opportunities for people to make healthier choices. Make a difference in your community: Spread the word about strategies for preventing heart disease and encourage people to live heart healthy lives.

How can YOU make a difference during the month of February – Heart Health Month

- Wear red on February 5th (the day nationally-recognized to wear red and promote heart health!).
- Like the Heart Foundation on Facebook and follow them on Twitter and share the postings with your friends.
- Educate yourself. Visit www.theheartfoundation.org to learn more.
- Donate to the Heart Foundation and help support heart research. Visit www.theheartfoundation.org to learn more.



Help the Historical Society Identify this Photograph

Tommy Allen from the Anson County Historical Society asked The Express to publish this photograph in hopes that someone can help them identify this man and/or service station.

Those who are over the age of 60 remember well that when your car needed a fill up you went to a service station. And, all service stations were just what their name implied, service for your automobile. When you pulled up to the pumps the attendant came out to see how he could help you, usually asking, "Fill 'er up?" Once he had the pump going, and while he cleaned your windshield, he would ask, "Check your oil?" Attendants would even check your tire pressures and help with any other things your car might need - all while you were there just to get gas. And, there was no extra charge for these services. The attendant would then accept payment for your gas at the car window, and you would be on your way, never having had to step out of your vehicle. Can you imagine!

The last two service stations in Wadesboro that performed that service are still open and still providing first class vehicle care, they just no longer sell gas. They are Allen Snuggs at Wadesboro Car Care (704-694-3772) and Alan Jackson at East Wade Gulf (704-694-2787).

If you can shed any light on this photograph please call the Historical Society at 704-694-6694.

Affordable Care Act Open Enrollment Period Ends Jan. 31

North Carolinians can enroll or re-enroll in health insurance plans now

North Carolinians can enroll or re-enroll in quality, affordable health coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace now.

During the open-enrollment period, which runs from Nov. 1 to Jan. 31, uninsured North Carolinians will be able to enter the Health Insurance Marketplace and select plans that fit their needs and budgets. People who currently have coverage through the Marketplace should check the website to learn about new options and ensure they are getting the correct amount of financial help.

For many North Carolinians, affordability is a real concern in their health care decision-making. In the past, high premium costs have forced many to go without health insurance simply because they could not afford it. The good news is that financial assistance is available to help people pay for plans – in fact, 92% of North Carolinians who signed up for Affordable Care Act coverage received financial assistance to make their plan more affordable.

The NC Navigator Consortium and Enroll America are urging North Carolinians to check out Affordable Care Act plans. In the last enrollment period, over 613,000 N.C. residents enrolled in health coverage through the Marketplace, providing them with the peace of mind that comes with protecting themselves and their families. This coming open-enrollment period is the next opportunity North Carolinians have to take advantage of the coverage options available through the Marketplace.

"We encourage North Carolinians to check out their health care coverage options in the upcoming enrollment period," said Jennifer Simmons, director of the NC Navigator Consortium. "We have in-person assisters in all counties across North Carolina who can sit down face-to-face with consumers for free to answer questions and help them make the best coverage decision for them and their families."

North Carolinians can find free in-person assisters available in their communities by calling 1-855-733-3711 or using the Get Covered Connector tool at www.gaconnector.org. In-person assisters in Eastern North Carolina will accommodate scheduling needs of people affected by Hurricane Matthew.

Enroll America's North Carolina State Director Sorien Schmidt said North Carolinians who are losing coverage because their insurance providers are leaving the Marketplace should take advantage of the available in-person assisters and review plans that are still available to them.

"There are still many health insurance options for North Carolinians through the Marketplace and we encourage those who need to re-enroll to review plans available to them," said Schmidt. "We will continue working as a team to reach out to the uninsured wherever they are with the information they need to get covered and make they receive the most up-to-date financial package available to them."

While the fourth open-enrollment period provides an opportunity for North Carolinians to gain access to quality, affordable health care, it also gives people a chance to avoid paying a fine when they file their taxes. Those who do not enroll in a plan by Jan. 31, 2017, could face a fine of \$695 or 2.5% of their yearly income, whichever is greater.

The NC Navigator Consortium is a group of 13 health care, social service, and legal aid organizations that helps North Carolina consumers enroll in affordable health insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act. The consortium is led by Legal Aid of North Carolina, a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free civil legal aid to low-income North Carolinians. Learn more at www.legalaidnc.org.

Free Groceries for Families in Need February 1

For families in need, free groceries will be available. The Mobile Food Pantry and CHS Mobile Health Unit will be at Peachland United Methodist Church, located at 19 Allen Street, on Wednesday, February 1, from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

- Be sure to bring your own bags, boxes or carts to carry your food.
- Arrive between 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. to be sure you can receive food.
- If it is raining the day of or before the delivery, contact Anson Crisis Ministry for a recorded message to know if it is cancelled: 704-694-2445.
- If you have not yet done so, bring proof of your income to register.
- You can only pick up food for yourself and one other registered household.

This event is sponsored by Anson Crisis Ministry and local United Methodist and Baptist Churches. Interested in volunteering? Call Rev. Angel Christ at 704-272-8124 or Rev. Cindy Lunsford at (828) 891-2753.

Veterans Meeting on February 10

There will be a Veterans Council meeting on Friday, February 10 at 6 p.m. at the Woodmen of the World Lodge on Highway 74 West in Wadesboro. All veterans and their spouses are invited to attend.

For more information call 704-694-6770.

Do You Need a Coat or Blanket? Would You Like to Donate?

The Faith-Based Center of Hope continues their "Warm Coats, Warm Hearts" program. They have distributed coats to several of the churches and schools in Anson County. Blankets for the elderly are also available.

Ebenezer Missionary Baptist Church is the pick up site, or you can deliver donated items there too. Just call to schedule it.

To donate coats and blankets or to request help, please contact Vancine Sturdivant at 704-848-4412.

Wadesboro Leaf Collection Ends February 1

The Town of Wadesboro is conducting its annual collection of leaves.

The Town's leaf collection equipment will only pick up leaves and pine straw. Please keep this in mind when putting your leaves out to be picked up. Do not mix any objects such as limbs, bricks, rocks or building debris with the leaves. Town employees can be seriously injured and equipment can be damaged by objects mixed with the leaves. Please place these items in separate piles for collection. Mixed debris in with the leaves will not be picked up.

The leaf truck follows the same route as the garbage truck follows. Please be patient, as it usually takes approximately two weeks to complete the entire town once. When the leaves really begin to fall, it will take even longer to complete the routes.

Remember to have all of your leaves out for pickup before February 1. Leaf collection will stop on this date.

For more information contact Hugh James, Public Works Director, at (704) 694-5171.

Dancercise Class Offered at Grace Senior Center

Dancercise, which is exercising while dancing, is being offered at Grace Senior Center. Dancercise is a blend of aerobics and dance moves, something that many people find to be lots of fun. Participants enjoy great music and learn actual dance moves. The class being offered is a beginners class. There is no registration and no charge for the class.

The class is ongoing. So, if you didn't make it to the first class there is still plenty of opportunity to join in later. Each month the schedules will be given out with class dates and times.

The Dancercise class is held from 10 to 11 a.m. on Thursdays, and 1 to 2 p.m. on Mondays. This class is open to anyone who wants to exercise! For more information and to register call Findey Knotts or Eva Diggs at 704-694-6616.