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

How NC Education Lottery Funds Benefit Anson County

In Fiscal Year 2021, education programs in Anson County received \$1,214,032 in lottery funds. Elected officials in the state legislature decide how to best use the money provided to the state by the lottery each year.

Prekindergarten \$318,700 Being ready to learn helps kids get the most out of school. The N.C. Pre-K program serves four-year-old children who are at risk of falling behind their peers as they prepare for kindergarten. Thanks to lottery funds, 64 children in Anson County were provided a free, academic pre-school experience last year.

College Scholarships \$45,538 Lottery funds help college students get learning that lasts a lifetime. Lottery funds provide scholarships based on financial need to help students cover the costs of attending a state university or community college in North Carolina. Last year, 40 scholarships went to Anson County students scholarships.

Financial Aid \$21,639 A second way that the lottery helps make college affordable is through the UNC Need-Based Grant Program. The money supports grants to help students cover the costs of attending a state university within the UNC system. Last year, 116 grants went to Anson County students.

Non-Instructional Support \$778,154 It takes a team to make schools work. Lottery funds helped support the operations of public and charter schools, including the costs of support staff such as office assistants, custodians and substitute teachers.

School Transportation \$50,001 Just like students need a place to learn, they also need a safe way to get to school. Money raised by the lottery helps cover costs for school-provided transportation, like bus drivers' salaries, fuel, and other related costs. Last year, Anson County received over \$50,001 to help cover the cost of school transportation. Local officials decide the best use of the funds the county receives.

Needs-Based School Construction Grant \$15,000,000 In 2017, legislators increased funding for school construction by creating a new needs-based grant program. This new program, funded exclusively with money raised by the lottery, helps small, rural counties with critical building needs to build new schools. Anson County received \$15,000,000 in 2019 to help meet its school construction needs.

Lottery Funds Have Supported Anson County for More Than a Decade Lottery funds have made a difference in Anson County every year since 2006. Over time, lottery funds have been directed by legislators to support different education programs, including paying for the salaries of teachers and teacher assistants and digital learning initiatives.

Cumulative Total \$35,126,266 Education figures reflect totals from when the lottery began on March 30, 2006 through the end of Fiscal Year 2021 ending June 30, 2021.



Splash Pad Proposed for Wadesboro Park

On their Facebook page, the Town of Wadesboro shared information and a photo for a splash pad to be installed at Wadesboro Park. Here is the Facebook post:

"Many of you have been following along with the Town's proposed splash pad installation project, so we wanted to share the first draft rendering of what it will look like. It will be located at the Wadesboro Park (off of Morven Road and Gatewood Street). Keep in mind that these designs are preliminary and may change, but this is the overall size and makeup we're hoping for.

Construction will begin in late spring/early summer and continue through the fall of 2023, with the expectation being that it will be open in time for Memorial Day 2024.

We're so excited to bring this recreational opportunity to the wonderful people of Wadesboro in the near future!"

What is a splash pad? A splash pad or spray pool is a recreation area, often in a public park, for water play that has little or no standing water. This is said to eliminate the need for lifeguards or other supervision, as there is little risk of drowning.

Typically there are ground nozzles that spray water upwards out of the splash pad's raindeck. There may also be other water features such as a rainbow (semicircular pipe shower), or mushroom- or tree-shaped showers. Some splash pads feature movable nozzles similar to those found on fire trucks to allow users to spray others. The showers and ground nozzles are often controlled by a hand activated-motion sensor, activated by the user, to run for limited time.

Typically the water is either freshwater, or recycled and treated water, that is typically treated to at least the same level of quality as swimming pool water standards. These splash pads are often surfaced in textured non-slip concrete or in crumb rubber.

ACDVC Purple Ribbon Campaign 2022 Recognition

This is a release from Anson County Domestic Violence Coalition:

As many of you know the month of October was National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. During October, the Anson County Domestic Violence Coalition kicked off our annual Purple Ribbon Campaign, which came to a close on January 31, to raise funds and awareness for domestic violence. The 2022 campaign was a success, but there is always more that can be done to combat domestic violence.

We would like to thank those of you that made this year's campaign a success. Without the support of the community we could not be able to do what we do for our victims. These funds are used to defray the costs of direct services, to match the grants our organization receives, to promote community awareness and education and most importantly to assist victims and their families.

We want our community to know that you not alone and we are here for those in need. Even though the campaign has officially closed, there is always a need for community support through donations and even through volunteering.

Again, we want to thank and recognize all who have contributed to the success of this campaign. We would also like to thank those individuals who contributed anonymously. The following is a list of contributors who have allowed us to recognize their contribution: Town of Peachland; Town of Ansonville; Premiere Fibers; Janine Rywak; Dr. Michael Lincoln; Bethel United Methodist Church; John and June Witherspoon; Pee Dee Electric.

Shamrock Shuffle 5K & Shop Local Event

The Anson County Chamber of Commerce will host the Shamrock Shuffle 5K Run/Walk & Shop Local Event on Saturday, March 18 to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. All Shamrock Shuffle 5K Run/Walk proceeds help support ongoing Chamber programs, activities and community events!

Interested in being a vendor? Visit: form.jotform.com/ansonchamber/vendor-registration. All vendor applications have to be completed, signed, and fees paid no later than Wednesday, March 15. The Shamrock Shuffle Event Committee will review all applications as they are submitted. If approved, a confirmation and a link to submit payment will be emailed.

Wanting to participate in the 5K run/walk? Pre-registration fee is \$30 for adults, \$15 for all school age (K-12th) participants. Day of race registration is available; however, registration fees will increase to \$35 for adults, \$20 students (K-12th grade). No refunds will be given. Register at: runsignup.com/Race/NC/Wadesboro/ShamrockShuffle5Kevent.

Registration fee includes a race t-shirt, and one FREE glass of beer to participants 21 years of age and older. Photo ID will be required on race day, no exceptions. T-Shirts guaranteed only if registered by March 3. Additional beer will be available for purchase (cash only) for \$5 per cup. There will be food trucks, vendors, local shops open, a cruise-in, and music in uptown Wadesboro. All activities will conclude at 5:00 p.m.

Contact Shelby Emrich, Chamber Director, for more information at 704-694-4181 or emrich@ansoncountychamber.org.

Anson Extension ECA to have Spaghetti Plate Sale

The Anson Extension Community Association (ECA) (formerly known as the Extension Homemakers Clubs) will be hosting their first annual Spaghetti Plate Sale! The sale will be held at the Anson Extension Office, located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro, on Friday, February 10, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The cost of the plates is \$10 and will include spaghetti, salad, garlic bread and a drink. Tickets for the plates must be purchased by this Friday, February 3. Deliveries are limited to businesses and schools only with a minimum order of 10.

County Extension Director Roshunda Terry said, "Proceeds from this sale will go to ECA members attending various state events to learn new initiatives and outreach methods to bring back to the county and implement. Funds will also help with expenses incurred to do this community outreach event. Currently our ECA group is compiled of about six ladies, all retired, who still see the need to help with issues that are present in our county. The group is always looking for more individuals to join and expand their membership. If you are interested in learning more about ECA, please give them a call at 704.694.2915."

"The North Carolina Extension & Community Association, formerly known as the Extension Homemakers Association, is an adult volunteer organization that works within the communities to empower families and individuals to improve their quality of life. Our mission is to strengthen families through: Leadership Development," Terry concluded.

Would You Like to Serve on a Chamber Committee?

This is a release from The Anson County Chamber of Commerce: Would you like to be more involved with the Anson County Chamber? Help with planning and volunteering at one of our six major events? We are excited to launch our Chamber Committee's for 2023. This is a great way to not only work with Chamber staff and the board of directors, but to have the opportunity to meet and work with fellow Chamber members. If you are interested in serving, have questions or would like more information, please contact Shelby Emrich, Chamber Director, at 704-694-4181 or emrich@ansoncountychamber.org.

Committee members serve as "business liaisons" to the Chamber and the community and assist in carrying out the mission and goals of the Chamber. Completion of the application does not guarantee acceptance on a committee due to committee size.

Anson County Board of Commissioners Meets February 7

The next regular meeting of the Anson County Board of Commissioners is scheduled for Tuesday, February 7 at 6 p.m.

The meetings take place in the Board Room, Suite 209, of the Anson County Government Center which is located at 101 South Greene Street in uptown Wadesboro.

To schedule an appearance at a board meeting, please sign up prior to the meeting. Information is available at 704-994-3201.

The Commissioners' board meetings are live-streamed on their YouTube channel. Also, the videos are archived so they can be viewed at any time. Visit youtube.com and search for Anson Commissioners.

Cheraw Arts Commission Offers Pottery Class February 9

The Cheraw Arts Commission will offer a Pottery Class in February. The 2 part class will provide basic instruction in pottery handbuilding and glazing techniques. The first class will be on February 9 followed by the final class on February 23. Class time is 10:00am until 1:00pm and will be held at the Cheraw Community Center – 200 Powe Street.

Class instructor is ceramic artist Jane Crossman. Participants will learn basic handbuilding techniques such as pinching, coiling and slab built pottery at the initial class with glazing planned for the second class. Students will make a bowl or mug with textures and other decorative techniques. Additional items that will be created include ornaments and garden markers. Students (9th-12th) and Adults can participate in the class. All supplies are included in the \$75 fee.

Call the Cheraw Arts Commission for additional information and to register by February 3: (843.537.8420 x 12).

The Express is on the web at www.TheExpressNewspaper.com

Eligible North Carolinians Encouraged to Claim Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Benefits

Research shows millions of dollars in eligible credits go unclaimed each year

Governor Cooper encourage eligible North Carolinians to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) tax credit on their upcoming federal taxes. "North Carolina families should take a moment today to determine if they are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit," said Governor Roy Cooper. "This can help hard working families with tax relief they deserve."

For over forty-five years, the EITC has been supporting hardworking people by offering tax credits to low- to moderate-income workers and families. The EITC, combined with the Child Tax Credit (CTC), lifts over nine million people out of poverty annually – half of them children.

North Carolina residents who earned less than \$59,187 from wages, income from a job where the employer didn't withhold tax, or money made from self-employment including owning and operating a business or farm last year may qualify for the EITC and might not know it. Those who don't claim the credit are missing a tax benefit they have earned.

The resources below offer support in identifying if residents are eligible for the EITC and supplemental help in completing and filing their taxes.

- The Internal Revenue Service offers an interactive online tool, EITC Assistant at www.irs.gov/eitcassistant, that guides taxpayers through EITC eligibility and estimates their possible credit.
- Free tax return preparation is available to assist workers in avoiding costly errors at www.irs.gov/vita.
- Eligible EITC workers may visit www.IRS.gov to find a free tax assistance site.
- Free filing software is available at www.irs.gov/freefile to help prepare and e-file federal taxes.

For more information, please visit EITC Central at www.eitc.irs.gov.

Free Tax Assistance Available in March & April at Grace Senior Center

Free income tax assistance will be available for Anson County Residents sixty years of age or older of low- or moderate-income needing help in preparing their income tax returns. The assistance is a program sponsored by AARP and Grace Senior Center.

Volunteer counselors trained in cooperation with the Internal Revenue Service will be at Grace Senior Center on Wednesday, March 1 and Wednesday, April 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. each day. This free assistance is designed to help taxpayers fill out forms 1040EZ, 1040A, 1040 and the North Carolina return.

Persons using the services should bring a picture ID, this year's tax package, age and earnings statements (forms W-2) received from employers, interest statements from the bank (form 1099-INT), a copy of last year's tax return, and any other relevant information concerning income and expenses.

Electronic filing of returns will be available. If you are interested call Grace Senior Center to register and for additional information at (704) 694-6616.