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North Carolinians Reminded to Prepare and Practice for Severe Weather

This is Severe Weather Preparedness Week

March 5-11 is Severe Weather Preparedness Week and Governor Roy Cooper is urging North Carolinians to prepare and practice safety plans in case severe weather strikes.

"Spring is the most active season for thunderstorms and tornadoes across North Carolina, but we know severe weather can strike at any time," Governor Cooper said. "Residents across North Carolina can help protect themselves and their families by being prepared for severe weather by updating their emergency kits, having a preparedness plan, and ensuring they have a way to stay informed about the weather conditions and emergency announcements."

Tornadoes form during severe thunderstorms when winds change direction and increase in speed. These storms can produce large hail and damaging winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. A tornado can develop rapidly with little warning, so having a plan in place will allow you to respond quickly.

Across the state in 2022, North Carolina recorded 21 tornado touchdowns and 125 large hail events, 951 severe thunderstorms with damaging wind and hail, and 74 flood or flash flood events.

Emergency Management officials recommend the following safety tips:

- Develop a family emergency plan so each member knows what to do, where to go and who to call during an emergency.
- If thunder roars, go indoors! Lightning is close enough to strike you.
- Know where the nearest safe room is, such as a basement or interior room away from windows.
- Know the terms: Tornado WATCH means severe weather is possible. Tornado WARNING means severe weather is occurring; take shelter immediately.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit for use at home or in your vehicle. Make sure to include a 3-day supply of non-perishable food and bottled water.
- If driving, leave your vehicle immediately to seek shelter in a safe structure. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle and do not stop under an overpass or bridge.
- If there is no shelter available, take cover in a low-lying flat area.

Get more information on tornadoes and overall emergency preparedness online at ReadyNC.gov.

4-H's Clover Crawl is this Friday!

The Anson County 4-H and 4-H Youth Promise Clover Crawl will be held this Friday, March 10 at the Lockhart-Taylor Center in Wadesboro, from 6:00 until 11:00 p.m. The Clover Crawl is an adult, 21 and over event. The event will be sure to bring an evening of fun, food and dancing. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and drinks will be served and DJ Rich will be DJing.

Tickets bought in advance are \$50 per person and can be purchased at the Extension Office, located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro, Lacey's in Wadesboro, or from committee members and Anson Extension staff. Ticket price at the door will be \$60. Tables can be purchased for \$500 and will include eight tickets. If you are interested in purchasing a table, please call the Extension Office at 704-694-2915.

In 2022 4-H programs reached over 600 youth. Youth participated in activities like summer camps, community clubs, district and state events and other year-round educational programs at minimal costs due to fundraising. Anson 4-H and 4-H Youth Promise also work with adults, volunteer leaders and youth to provide community projects and programs that focus on parenting skills and enhanced leadership abilities. All 4-H programming is available to any youth between ages 5-19. Funds raised from this event will be used to support on-going 4-H youth programs in Anson County.

This fundraiser has been a success in previous years and 4-H is optimistic that Clover Crawl will continue to thrive. 4-H programs have had a significant impact on Anson's youth through the years. With your help and support, programs can continue to make significant contributions to our youth's future, and the future of our county.

If you would like to learn more information please contact Samuel Cole, Jr. 4-H Agent at 704-694-2915.

NC Pre-Kindergarten

The NC Pre-Kindergarten program is designed to provide high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for eligible four-year-old children. The child must be four years old on or before August 31 of the 2023 school year.

For parents seeking to prepare their children for success in a pre-kindergarten program, for transitioning to elementary school kindergarten, you may go to www.ansonchildren.org/nc-pre-k-program to print out the NC Pre-K application.

You can also stop by the Partnership to pick up an application. TYou may turn in the completed application Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon or 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

For questions or concerns please contact the Partnership at 704-694-4036.



Anson Middle School Cafeteria Staff - Rock Stars!

Anson Middle School released this message on Tuesday, March 7: We would like to extend a huge shout out to our cafeteria staff. These "behind the scenes" Rock Stars pivoted and adjusted (seemingly with ease) today when, during lunch, the power went out across the entire campus. These ladies made sure all of our students were served a fresh and hot meal - in spite of the challenge!

THANK YOU, cafeteria staff!!

Get Ready for an Abundance of In-Season Produce

Farmers' Markets are opening back up and it's time to shop in season. Choosing in season produce is a great way to purchase what's in stock and save money. In season produce is likely to be in abundance, and therefore is often sold at a lower price.

North Carolina has several in season items during the months of March and April. Produce to look for includes asparagus, broccoli, collards, greens, lettuce, mushrooms, peanuts, radishes, spinach, and of course sweet potatoes.

Check out the North Carolina Fruit and Vegetable Availability Chart (ncagr.gov/markets/chart.htm) before your next grocery trip. Shop local and support your farmers!

More In My Basket (MIMB) staff can assist North Carolina residents throughout the state to apply for SNAP or answer questions about the EBT card. MIMB has a presence in several counties across the state. If you're interested in MIMB programs, contact Anson County Extension at (704) 694-2915 to see what programs are offered. You can also find your county offices online under the "County Centers" option at www.ces.ncsu.edu or by calling the MIMB program office.

MIMB staff can be reached by calling the toll-free numbers, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5p.m. Services are available in English and Spanish. Call MIMB today, they are ready to help you.

English Toll Free: 1-855-240-1451 Spanish Toll Free: 1-888-382-7105

Gulledge Fire Department Barbecue is Saturday

Everyone is invited to come to the Gulledge Fire Department and enjoy delicious barbecue this Saturday, March 11. They begin at 11 a.m. You can enjoy chicken or pork barbecue plates with baked beans, slaw, rolls, homemade desserts and a drink...all for only \$12.

Warm or cold cartons will be available for \$12 also.

Be sure to get there before they sell out!

Class of 1973 Reunion Meeting

The Bowman High School Class of 1973 is holding a meeting to plan the 50th reunion this Saturday, March 11 at 3 p.m. at Lady Bug Restaurant in Wadesboro. All classmates are invited to attend.

For more information contact Brenda S. Rorie at 704-695-5196.

Musical Program at the Library

The Hampton B. Allen Library invites everyone to join them for a musical program presented by Dr. Leon Smith on Monday, March 13 at 10:30 a.m. in the Little Theater.

Any questions please call 704-694-5177.

Come Celebrate St. Patty's Day by Learning String Art

Celebrate St. Patty's Day with a fun evening of string art with Kristy Davis at the Drake Gallery Education Room, located at 108 South Rutherford Street in uptown Wadesboro. The class will take place on Thursday, March 16, from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Participants will learn string art by making a beautiful 8x10 four-leaf clover.

Everything will be provided except hammers. Please bring one with you! Drinks and snacks will be available. Cost of workshop is \$25. Be sure to register as soon as possible because spaces are limited and going fast!

For information and to register contact Beth Traywick at the Arts Council at:

ansonart@windstream.net or 704-694-4950.

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

Safe Kids Anson Hosting Operation Medicine Drop

Safe Kids Anson will host Operation Medicine Drop on Saturday, March 25, from 9:00 until 11:00 a.m. in the Food Lion parking lot in Wadesboro. Bring your unused or expired prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines for safe disposal. Syringes and needles will not be accepted for collection.

The average North Carolinian fills 17 prescriptions annually and studies show that as much as 40% of the drugs dispensed are never used. Abuses of unused and/or expired prescription medications is a public health issue, leading to accidental poisoning, overdose, and abuse, as well as contaminating our water system. Poisoning is the number one cause of injury-related deaths in the United States. The latest statistics show that the rate of unintentional poisoning deaths in children ages 0-14 in North Carolina decreased by 28% from 2004-2018. However, children ages 0-4 are still at a greater risk of poisoning death.

In the last several years, 6 in 10 poisoning deaths were caused by prescription, over-the-counter medication, or illicit drugs according to data collected from the Centers for Disease Control.

Operation Medicine Drop is a partnership of Safe Kids North Carolina, the Riverkeepers of North Carolina, NC State Bureau of Investigation, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of North Carolina, and local law enforcement agencies working together to encourage the public to safely dispose of unused, unwanted, and expired medication. For additional information please contact LeAnn Melton Johnson at (704) 694-4036.



Scammers May be Targeting Your Smart TV

Scammers can target victims through any device connected to the internet, and your TV is no exception. BBB Scam Tracker (bbb.org/scamtracker) has seen an influx of reports about scammers catching people off guard with pop-ups on their smart TVs. Their objective is to steal your personal information and money.

How the scam works You open a familiar streaming service on your smart TV. However, you can't log in. Instead, a pop-up appears, telling you there is a problem with your device or your streaming subscription. You need to call a phone number or visit a website to fix it.

Don't fall for it! If you call the number, scammers pretend to be customer service representatives. They will insist you pay an activation fee or allow them remote access to your smart TV. These con artists will get your credit or debit card number if you pay the fee. If you give them access to your device or click on a link they provide, the scammers may install malware on your TV and use it to gain access to sensitive personal information.

Sometimes scammers ask you to "fix" the issue by paying them in gift cards. One consumer reported that after calling a number that appeared in a pop-up on their smart TV, a scammer instructed them to purchase three \$100 Xbox gift cards to add "anti-hacking protection" to their account. After buying the gift cards and contacting the number again, it became clear they were dealing with scammers.

How to avoid smart TV scams

- Double-check any fees you have to pay. If scammers ask you to pay an activation fee, antivirus protection fee, or any other kind of fee, do some research beforehand. For example, scammers claim you need to pay an activation fee to start using your Roku. However, a quick online search reveals that Roku never charges activation or registration fees.
- Don't fall for fake websites. Scammers love to create imitation websites using URLs that are just a letter or two off. Fake websites are a threat, even on smart TVs, so double-check the URL. Another way to protect yourself is to avoid clicking on links in pop-ups and, instead, type web URLs directly into your browser.
- Check before you call. If a "customer service" phone number appears in a pop-up, double-check it before you call. Contact a streaming service or TV manufacturer's website to find their customer support number.
- Never let anyone control your device remotely. Scammers usually ask for remote computer access, but they could also ask for access to your smart TV. Don't ever give control of your device to a stranger.

Recruiting Volunteers for Meals on Wheels

Grace Senior Center is recruiting volunteers to help with their Meals on Wheels by delivering meals. If you are interested in helping Anson County's shut-in and elderly citizens with this important program, please contact Cynthia Miles at 704-694-6616.