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

Covid Update for Anson County

According to the latest information posted by the Anson County Health Department on Friday, March 10 the county was at 8,472 total Covid cases, with 14 active. The number of Covid related deaths is 103. On Monday, February 13 the county was at 8,421 total COVID-19 cases, with 43 active and 102 deaths. On January 13 the county was at 8,225 total cases, with 78 active and 101 deaths. On December 14 the county was at 8009 total cases, with 37 active and 100 deaths. On November 17 the county was at 7,940 total cases, with 25 active and 100 deaths. The total case count has increased by over 530 since mid-November.

The Health Department offers the bivalent booster and primary series Monday through Friday. No appointment is necessary.

Flu Shots If you would like to schedule an appointment for a shot, please call (704) 694-5188.

You can stop by the health department and pick up test kits to keep at home. If you aren't feeling well you can send someone and they will send some to you. The Health Department is also offering N-95 masks.

For more specific information related to Anson County and NC please visit: covid19.ncdhhs.gov.

The Health Department is located at 110 West Ashe Street in Wadesboro. The telephone number is 704-694-5188.



Lilesville Elementary School Students Enjoy PBIS Bingo Event

LES students who met the criteria had a great time at the PBIS BINGO event on Monday. Many students walked away with amazing prizes! K-1st showed off their reading skills with site word BINGO, while 2nd-5th played many fun rounds of the classic!

Chamber of Commerce Board Announces Leadership Reorganization

The Anson County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors issued this release on Tuesday, March 14: Greetings from the Anson County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors -

This morning, the Board of Directors for the Anson County Chamber of Commerce met and decided to undergo a leadership re-organization; as a result, President/CEO Shelby Emrich was removed by the Board from her position effective immediately. In the interim, the duties of this role will be divided amongst board members in order to ensure a seamless transition period for all members and services as we prepare to hire the next Chamber President.

We made this decision after careful deliberation and examination of where the Chamber is currently and where we want to be in the future. We acknowledge many of you will have questions about the nature of this decision, and we will do our best to provide you with answers. For now, know your Board is committed to maintaining the same positive momentum the Chamber has achieved in recent years, and we will strive to make this transition as seamless as possible.

Lastly, thank you for your continued commitment to the Anson County Chamber of Commerce and your efforts to encourage prosperity in this wonderful place we call home. The Board is committed to serving you in the most effective way possible and we simply ask for your patience in the coming months. We have confidence in this organization and the value it brings to the community, we have no doubt we will come through this the same way we have succeeded thus far - together. Thank you, Board of Directors, Anson County Chamber of Commerce

North Carolina's January Employment Figures Released

North Carolina's seasonally adjusted January 2023 unemployment rate was 3.8 percent, unchanged from December's revised rate. The national rate decreased 0.1 of a percentage point to 3.4 percent.

North Carolina's unemployment rate increased 0.2 of a percentage point from a year ago. The number of people employed increased 10,334 over the month to 4,972,559 and increased 23,120 over the year. The number of people unemployed decreased 4,198 over the month to 193,845 and increased 7,121 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, increased 15,300 to 4,867,800 in January. Major industries experiencing increases were Leisure & Hospitality Services, 4,900; Construction, 3,900; Government, 2,700; Education & Health Services, 1,900; Information, 1,700; Manufacturing, 1,400; Financial Activities, 1,100; and Other Services, 600.

Major industries experiencing decreases were Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 2,100; and Professional & Business Services, 800. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged.

Since January 2022, Total Nonfarm jobs increased 169,700 with the Total Private sector increasing by 162,300 and Government increasing by 7,400. Major industries experiencing increases were Leisure & Hospitality Services, 42,500; Professional & Business Services, 26,900; Education & Health Services, 25,500; Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 16,100; Construction, 12,800; Financial Activities, 11,200; Manufacturing, 9,900; Other Services, 9,500; Information, 8,000; and Government, 7,400.

The only major industry experiencing a decrease over the year was Mining & Logging, 100.

Free Tax Assistance for Seniors

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, April 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 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.

Shamrock Shuffle 5K & Shop Local Event is Saturday

The Anson County Chamber of Commerce will host the Shamrock Shuffle 5K Run/Walk & Shop Local Event this 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!

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 one FREE glass of beer to participants 21 years of age and older. Photo ID will be required on race day, NO EXCEPTIONS. 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 the Chamber for more information at 704-694-4181.

Mobile Food Market is Thursday

The Anson Mobile Food Market will be held on Thursday, March 16, starting at 10 a.m. at the Caraway Foundation, located at 9162 Highway 52 in Ansonville. Attendees can receive free food items. This is a free initiative, so please stop by and get some healthy food for your family. The event will include blood pressure and blood sugar checks, as well information on healthy eating and lifestyle.

Library to Host Writers' Club Contest Winners

The Hampton B. Allen Library will be hosting the winners of the Anson County Writer's Club's 32nd annual contest on Monday, March 20 at 11:00 a.m. in the Pritchett room. They are inviting everyone to join them for this special program. Any questions please call 704-694-5177.

Spring-Summer Pesticide Classes

In-person pesticide applicator credits are available in Anson and Stanly counties. Whether you have an NCDA&CS commercial or private pesticide applicator license, need Auxin or Paraquat training, several category hours are available. The following March 29 classes will be held at the Anson County Extension office, 501 McLaurin St., Wadesboro, NC 28170. Please register for classes at least 3 days in advance by calling 704-694-2915 or you can email: aimee_colf@ncsu.edu.

- March 29, 8:30-9:30 a.m. 1hr. NODX Auxin herbicides
 - March 29, 9:30-10:30 a.m. 1 hr. NODX Paraquat training, participants must earn 100% on the exam to earn credit.
 - March 29, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. 1hr. NODX(SF)
 - March 29, 1-3 p.m. 2hr V Pesticide classes April through September will be held at the Stanly County AgriCivic Center, 26032 Newt Rd., Albemarle, NC 28001. Please register for each class at least 3 days in advance by calling 704-983-3987 or emailing kate-lyn_stegall@ncsu.edu.
 - April 5, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. 2hr. V
 - April 18, 1 - 3 p.m. 2hr. A, B, D, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, T, X
 - May 18, 4 - 6 p.m., 2hr. A, B, D, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, T, X
 - Aug. 9, 2 - 4 p.m. 2hr. A, B, D, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, T, X
 - Sept. 6, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. A, B, D, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, T, X
- Submitted by Aimee Colf, Horticulture Agent,

Law Enforcement Increasing Patrols for St. Patrick's Day

On the eve of St. Patrick's Day, state officials are reminding people to never drink and drive. From March 13-19, law enforcement agencies statewide will increase patrols to keep impaired drivers off the roads during the St. Patrick's Day "Booze It & Lose It" enforcement campaign.

"St. Patrick's Day is well established as a time for celebration, but people should do so responsibly," said Mark Ezzell, director of the N.C. Governor's Highway Safety Program. "Never get behind the wheel if you've been drinking alcohol. Drinking and driving can be deadly. Have a plan to get home safely so you don't risk seriously injuring or killing yourself or someone else."

During last year's weeklong observation of St. Patrick's Day, 225 alcohol-related crashes resulting in 11 deaths occurred on North Carolina roads.

"The most tragic thing about these deaths is that all of them could have been prevented and their impacts avoided, if people would just do their parts by planning ahead and ensuring they celebrate this St. Patrick's Day responsibly," said Colonel Freddy Johnson, Jr., commander of the North Carolina State Highway Patrol.

Increased enforcement during specific campaign periods year-round is a key part of making North Carolina roads safer.

If you drink and need a ride home, call a friend, take public transit or call a cab. All are better options than getting behind the wheel after you've been drinking.

For more safe driving tips, visit the N.C. Governor's Highway Safety Program (www.ncdot.gov/initiatives-policies) or follow NCGHSP on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Film and Discussion to Address Shortage of Services for People with I/DD

When it comes to serving people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), North Carolina is facing a double crisis: too many clients on a waiting list for services and not enough of a workforce to provide the help they need. Those dilemmas and how they can be addressed will be the topic of a short film, followed by a panel discussion, at Wingate University on Thursday, March 23.

The Arc of North Carolina and the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities, with support from the University, will present "Unmet: The Current Crisis in North Carolina for People with Disabilities" from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Batte Center's McGee Theatre.

Provost Jeff Frederick and professor Wendy Sellers, who was hired this year to develop and direct a new master of social work program at Wingate, will showcase the work of The Arc of North Carolina, which has provided advocacy and services to the I/DD community since 1953. Born out of a grassroots movement of families working to create services for children and adults who were being denied daycare, educational opportunities and work programs, The Arc provides support services for people with disabilities across the state.

"We are really excited to partner with The Arc of North Carolina and the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities in hosting this event," Dr. Sellers said. "As we continue to develop our upcoming MSW Program, we look forward to these opportunities to collaborate with organizations that are providing critical services to individuals, families and communities in the surrounding area."

The 25-minute "Unmet" documentary, commissioned by the NCCDD, follows the real-life situations of individuals with developmental disabilities and what their needs look like.

According to the NCCDD, some 16,000 people who are living with I/DD and qualify for services in the state are on a list called the Registry of Unmet Needs (RUN) while awaiting funding from the North Carolina General Assembly. Often that wait for essential services is longer than 10 years.

Additionally, many people with I/DD need daily support, such as help with bathing and cooking, to be able to live in their homes and communities safely. This assistance is provided by direct support professionals, who earn an average of only about \$13 an hour in North Carolina. As a result, many families affected by I/DD find it impossible to find staff for necessary services. A 2022 report by the Washington-based advocacy group ANCOR found that 63 percent of providers across the nation are discontinuing programs and services because of insufficient staffing.

"These are two long-stammering crises that we have to meet now," Talley Wells, executive director of the NCCDD, said in a press release. "The 'Unmet' film brings viewers inside the homes of North Carolina families and people with I/DD to see what our neighbors are experiencing due to the waitlist and workforce shortage."

Winston-Salem native Bryan Dooley, who chairs the NCCDD, says his hope is that state leaders will respond to the crises with bold action while the General Assembly is in session. "People with I/DD, when receiving adequate supports and services, can be productive, engaged citizens in their communities, and we can contribute to our society," Dooley says.

Wingate's event, hosted by the Lyceum Program, is free and open to the public. Reserve your seat.



Scan the QR code to reserve your spot!

By Savannah Phillips, student writer