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

Inmate Escaped April 27, Captured Within Twelve Hour Period

An inmate at Brown Creek Correctional Institution in Polkton escaped from the minimum security prison just after midnight on Wednesday, April 27. Devin Brown, 22, was captured shortly after 12 noon that same day in a wooded area in Landis, NC (Rowan County) by Department of Public Safety officers with K-9 dogs. Brown was serving a five year term for habitual impaired driving offenses. His release was scheduled for March 2019. No information was released on how Brown escaped the prison.

Anson County's Unemployment Rate at 6.1 Percent in March

Anson County's unemployment rate for March was 6.1 percent. In February the rate was 6.4 percent, and in January the rate was 6.5 percent. Statewide the unemployment rate for March was 5.4 percent. Anson's total labor force in March was 11,052. Of that number 10,380 were employed and 672 were unemployed. In February the total labor force was 10,849, with 10,153 employed and 696 unemployed. Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in all 100 of North Carolina's counties in March. Hyde County had the highest unemployment rate at 13.3 percent, while Buncombe County had the lowest at 4.2 percent. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases. Among the Metro areas, Rocky Mount at 7.6 percent experienced the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 4.4 percent. The March not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 5.4 percent. When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased in 84 counties, increased in 10, and remained unchanged in six. Twelve metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year while one increased and two remained unchanged. The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in March by 72,136 to 4,613,997 while those unemployed decreased 14,105 to 262,210. Since March 2015, the number of workers employed statewide increased 141,151, while those unemployed decreased 4,447.

Update on Veteran's Memorial Project



The Anson County Veteran's Council, with the help from donations from the Anson County community, is making progress with the Veteran's Memorial that is located at Wadesboro City Park, just off Center Street in Wadesboro. Stage 1 is almost complete. Carl Hildreth and his crew have poured and prepared the concrete, and done an excellent job. All interested citizens are welcome to visit the park to see the progress. You will be impressed

with the size and quality of this important memorial. When completed the memorial will feature a granite marker with the emblems of the five branches of services and flags along with the American flag on a 30 foot pole. The Memorial will also have the North Carolina flag and the Anson County flag on each side at 25 feet. There will be a box to deposit used American flags. Flags that are placed inside the box will be collected and disposed of properly. "We continue to need your tax deductible contributions to complete this project," said Ed Parker, Veteran's Council President. If you can help, please make your donation check payable to: Anson County Veteran's Council and mail it to PO Box 791, Wadesboro, NC 28170. For questions or more information contact Ed Parker at 704-695-5114.

Compassionate Friends Annual Balloon Release is May 12

The Compassionate Friends of the North Pee Dee, a support group for anyone who has suffered the loss of a child in their family, cordially invites you and your family to their annual Balloon Release and Covered Dish Meal event on Thursday, May 12. The event will take place at 6 p.m. at the Polkton Depot. This is a special time as everyone joins together to remember our children. Please bring a photograph of your child, a well-filled picnic basket, and your family and friends. We hope to see you there.

Lifeguard Training Offered

American Red Cross Lifeguard Certification will take place at Little Park Pool in Wadesboro on May 13, 14, 15. Lifeguard Renewal will be the weekend of May 20, 21, 22. A swim test is required in order to participate in the class and new students must be at least 15 years of age. For more information contact Wendell Small at 704-695-2782.

- **Lifeguard Training (New Students)**
May 13: 5 - 8 p.m.
May 14: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
May 15: 1 - 5 p.m.
- **Lifeguard Renewal**
May 20: 5 - 8 p.m.
May 21: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
May 22: 1 - 5 p.m.



HOLLA! Hosts YCC Male Mentoring/Motivational Retreat

On Friday, April 8, 45 male ninth graders of Anson High School's Youth Career Connect (YCC) Program attended a Male Mentoring/Motivational Retreat at the HOLLA! Center in Morven. "I am blessed by this," said Ted Ward, Veterans Benefits Officer for Anson County Government, as they all came in with sincere looks and firm handshakes. Mr. Ward was of the several men invited to share inspirational life experiences with the youth. Others included Sheriff Landric Reid, Wadesboro Police Chief Thedis Spencer, HOLLA! Activities Director Alex Gaddy, Local DJ Kenwyn Gatewood, Commissioner Jarvis Woodburn and Robert Gatewood, founder and president of the Marketing Pulpit International in Washington, DC. According to the Marketing Pulpit International's website, "Gatewood traveled to North Carolina on a mission to encourage young men to prepare for a future that is increasingly technology-based." During the event Gatewood broadcast a live radio segment on Radio One WOL-AM Newstalk 1450. The live radio segment featured HOLLA!'s founder Leon Gatewood, two of the student participants in the YCC program, Timothy Marshall and Justin Lee as well as teacher Daniel Burrows. The event, which included valuable prizes, motivation, breakfast and lunch, was sponsored by the 501c3 nonprofit, HOLLA! HOLLA! partnered with the Anson County school system to present the AHS Youth Career Connect (YCC) Motivation and Mentoring Retreat. YCC is a President Obama initiative designed to retool the high school experience for America's youth, challenging schools to scale up innovative models that personalize teaching and learning so that students stay on track to graduate with the knowledge and skills they'll need to succeed in college and in careers, exposing them to learning that links their studies in school to future college and career pathways - especially in the critically important fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The Anson County School System is one of 24 school systems in the United States of America to receive funding for the YCC Program. Deborah Davis is Anson County's Director. After a day packed with excitement and motivation, it all came to an end with a balloon release. The balloons represented the release of barriers to success. "Mrs. Davis and the families these youth represent would have been very proud of them today," said Leon Gatewood.



Pictured are Justin Lee, Robert Gatewood and Timothy Marshall as they broadcast live on Radio One.

Play Lone Star & Laundry and Bourbon is Special for Director Tommy Wooten

This Ansonia play features a terrific cast. STARTS THIS WEEKND! Get ready for lots of laughs!

In 2001, after living and working in Orlando as an actor, Tommy Wooten made the decision to start his own production company. "I had grown tired of auditioning and decided I would start producing shows with roles that I really wanted to play." Shortly after, Pot Luck Productions was born. Wooten, immediately went to the public library and began to read through script after script, searching for his first project, when he stumbled upon *Lone Star* by James McClure. Only a few pages in he knew that he had found the right show. The characters leapt off the page and were so funny and well written...and they reminded him of home. Wooten's character Roy reminded him a lot of his father, Tom Wooten, and he drew from him a lot when creating the character. Wooten hired a brilliant director and actors and started rehearsals right away. Pot Luck Productions entered the show in the Orlando International Fringe Festival, the biggest and longest running theater festival in the world. Over 100 shows from around the world are chosen to compete in a 10 day juried festival. Being a fledgling company they were just excited to be a part of it, however *Lone Star* was a huge break out hit and went on to win the Umbrella Award for Best Show. "It was quite simply one of the best times of my life!" exclaimed Wooten. "It was all glorious! The show went on to be extended and enjoyed a long run. Pot Luck Productions took off and started churning out hit after hit. It was a huge turning point in my career both as an actor producer and director." Wooten's father was never able to make it down to Florida in the 20 years that Wooten lived there and hadn't seen him perform since he was in high school. But, before he passed away in 2005, Wooten was able to come home for a month to spend time with him and he was able to watch the video of *Lone Star*. Wooten says the memory of seeing his father watch the play so intensely, belly laughing the entire time, is one that will stick with him for the rest of his life. "A lot like Roy in the play, my father was a flawed man, but he was an awesome man, and I'm so happy to be able to bring that to the stage here at home. This performance is for him." The show takes place in 1972, two years after Roy Caulder, once the hero of his high school class in Maynard, Texas has returned from the Vietnam War to find everything he knows has changed. About all he has left are memories of his glory days, his adoring younger brother Ray, his wife Elizabeth and his now crumbling 1959 pink Thunderbird. Wooten and Co-Director Gina Clarke have assembled an incredible cast of local actors including Lisa Tarlton of Marshville, Connie Thomas of Ansonville, Jason Price and Steve Adams of Wadesboro and Lindsay Melton of Rockingham. This is one of the funniest nights of theatre that you will ever experience! The play runs this weekend and next, May 13, 14, 15, 20, 21 and 22. The Friday and Saturdays shows are at 7:30 p.m. and the Sunday shows are at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and available at the Arts Council, located beside the Ansonia, weekdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For information call the Arts Council at 704-694-4950. The show is rated PG-13 for adult language and situations.



Veterans Meeting is May 20, All Veterans Invited

The Anson County's Veterans Council meeting will be held on Friday, May 20 at 6 p.m. at the Nation Guard Armory in Wadesboro. There will be an update on the Veterans Memorial as well as an evening of interesting events planned. A meal will be served, and all veterans and their spouses are welcome. The Veterans Council President is Edward Parker. For more information call 704-695-5114.