

You may have read in the news about the recent botulism outbreak at a Lancaster, Ohio church potluck dinner. As many as 21 cases have been confirmed, and tragically, one 55-year-old woman has died. Public health officials have now confirmed that potato salad made from home-canned potatoes are the likely cause. To be safe, it is critical that anyone who cans at home follow rigorous food safety guidelines.

Vegetables, meat, poultry and seafood should always be canned using a pressure canner, not with boiling water canners. Improperly canned low-acid foods such as these can harbor Clostridium botulism spores. And this is how - Botulism spores are present on most fresh food surfaces. The spore is found in soil all over the world and can survive harmlessly in soil and water for many years. Because they grow only in the absence of air, they are harmless on fresh foods.

When ideal conditions exist for growth, the spores produce vegetative cells, which multiply rapidly within three to four days. These ideal conditions include an environment consisting of a moist, low-acid food, a temperature between 40° and 120°F, and less than 2 percent oxygen - which occurs in any jar of canned food.

Home canning should follow strict hygienic recommendations to reduce risks. Pressure canners should be used for all low-acid foods. The botulism spores can only be killed by the high heat which can be obtained in a pressure canner. Water bath canners cannot do this. All low-acid foods should be processed in pressure canners operated at 10 to 15 PSI, or pounds per square inch of pressure as measured by a gauge. At these temperatures the time needed to destroy bacteria in low-acid canned food ranges from 20 to 100 minutes. The exact time depends on the kind of food being canned, the way it is packed into jars, and the size of jars.

The Anson County Cooperative Extension Center has home food preservation information sheets with specific times and pressures. In addition, the National Center for Home Food Preservation, through Georgia Cooperative Extension, is a trusted source and can be accessed at nchfp.uga.edu.

Finally, follow these safeguards at all times. Discard all raw or canned food that shows any sign of being spoiled. Discard all bulging or swollen cans of food and food from glass jars with bulging lids. Use only tested approved recipes (Ball Blue Book, USDA, etc.). Do not deviate substantially from the approved recipes. Do not invent your own recipe. Do not taste food from swollen containers or food that is foamy or has a bad odor. Process low-acid foods under pressure and for the recommended time for the size of can or jar you are using.

Do not assume that adding vinegar, lemon juice, citric acid or other acids will make low acid foods safe to can in a water bath canner. Do not can low-acid foods in the oven, in water-bath, open kettle or vegetable cooker.

Clean all surfaces with chlorine/water solution (one tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water) where any leaky containers may have contaminated. Then sanitize or discard any sponges or cloths used for cleanup. *By Janine B. Rywak, County Extension Director*

On Saturday, May 9 the HOLLA! Center in Morven will stage a 5K Walk/Run, as well as provide the kick-off location for the literacy project, "Florita Bell Griffin's Little Flower" International Cultural Art Project" of Houston, Texas. The theme of the 5K Race, "Run into the Freedom of Literacy," encapsulates the mission of both Holla and the Little Flower project.

100% of profits generated from all Little Flower products sold at the 5K Walk/Run will be donated to the M. R. Bell Scholarship Fund at Holla and to Holla.

The 5K will begin at 8 a.m. with a literacy rally at Morven Community Park, featuring live music by Gospel Rap Artist LOE4God, the sensational eight year old drummer Maxwell Manigan, and a vigorous warm-up routine by Creeta's Fitness Team.

For more information on the Little Flower Project visit www.littleflower-artist.com.

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Obituaries ... continued from page 3

The arrangements were in care of Leavitt Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made at leavittfuneralhomewadesboro.com.

Shackelford and brothers and sister, Jack, Willard, Claude and Eula Mae Shackelford.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Diabetes Association, 1300 Baxter St, #150, Charlotte, NC 28204.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made at leavittfuneralhomewadesboro.com.

Mr. Larry Ted Shackelford

Mr. Larry Ted Shackelford, 74, died Monday, May 4, 2015, at Carolinas Medical Center Union in Monroe.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 7, 2015, in the Chapel of Leavitt Funeral Home with Rev. Tony High officiating. Interment will follow in Horne Family Cemetery.

The family will greet friends from 6 until 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at the funeral home and other times at the home.

Larry was born June 4, 1940, in Mecklenburg County, NC, a son of the late George and Callie Garren Shackelford. Prior to his retirement he was self-employed as a ceramic tile and marble installer.

Surviving are his wife, Diane Horne Shackelford of the home; his children, Todd (Sandy) Shackelford of Monroe, Chris (Kathy) Shackelford of Cherryville, Ted (Angie) Shackelford of Nashville, TN, Chad (Kim) Horne of Polkton and Mike (Traci) Horne of Lynchburg, VA; his brother, Boyd Shackelford of Charlotte; 16 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his son, Robbie

Mr. Steven Smith

Mr. Steven Smith, 28, died May 2, 2015.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 9, 2015, preceded by visitation at 1:30 p.m. at Elizabeth Baptist Church in Marshville. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Public viewing is Thursday, May 7, from 1 to 7 p.m. at Richmond Funeral and Cremation Service of Wadesboro, located at 921 East Caswell Street, and on Friday, May 8, from 1 to 7 p.m. at Richmond Funeral and Cremation Service of Monroe.

Mrs. Mae Thomas Wright

Mrs. Mae Thomas Wright, 88, died Monday, May 4, 2015, at Meadowview Terrace Assisted Living in Wadesboro.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6, 2015, at Oakdale Baptist Church with Rev. Tracy Hickson and Rev. Arnold Jackson officiating. Inter-

ment will follow in Griffin Cemetery.

Mae was born December 7, 1926, in Mecklenburg County, NC, a daughter of the late Paul and Pearl Braswell Thomas. She retired from Anson County Schools after 30 years, having worked in the cafeterias at Peachland Polkton School and Anson High School. She was a dedicated member of Oakdale Baptist Church.

Surviving are her sons, Larry Wright and Tommy Wright, both of Polkton; her grandchildren, Tracie Phillips of Cheraw, Jennie Teal of Pageland, and Amber Brown and Ben Wright, both of Polkton; six great-grandchildren; and her sisters, Faye Maness and Betty Sue Caudle, both of Polkton and Carolyn Ponds of Peachland. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, T. C. Wright and brother, Hughes Thomas.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Oakdale Baptist Church, 3304 NC 218, Polkton, NC 28135.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home. Online condolences may be made at leavittfuneralhomewadesboro.com.

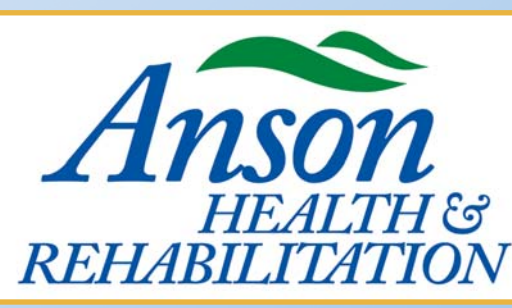
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Gay Lookabill, Administrator

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Anson Health & Rehab staff member Jennifer Tillman is pictured here with Rowene Bacon.

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