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

649 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County as of October 5

Two more deaths reported by the Health Department

As of Monday, October 5 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 649 reported cases of COVID-19. 69 of those cases were active. At that point they had discharged 580 cases, 574 to baseline health and six deaths.

In a release on Tuesday, September 29 the Health Department stated, "Unfortunately, we have to report two more deaths today that are related to COVID-19. Our thoughts are with those families who have lost loved ones. Our total number of deaths is now at six."

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported statewide as of Monday, October 5 there were 219,754 total cases of COVID-19, with 3,637 deaths. 3,188,371 completed tests and 971 currently hospitalized.

Recent history in Anson County: March 31 - 1 case; April 28 - 23 cases; May 26 - 62 cases; June 22 - 107 cases; July 27 - 285 cases; August 3 - 306 cases; August 9 - 328 cases; August 19 - 376 cases, August 26 - 408 cases, September 4 - 461 cases, September 14 - 513 cases, September 21 - 553 cases, September 28 - 605 cases

Special School Board Meeting on Oct. 12 to be Live Streamed on Youtube

The Anson County Board of Education will hold a special board meeting on Monday, October 12. Closed Session will begin at 4:00 p.m. and Open Session to the public will begin at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be live streamed through YouTube.

The public is invited to watch the meeting by following the Anson County Schools YouTube Channel.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss closed session topics, to review COVID-19 regulations for athletics and to consider administration recommendations for phasing in Plan B for the school system.

While the board only takes public comments at their regular meetings, comments can be presented by email to board members and read at the pleasure of the board.

Writers' Club Opens Annual Contests with New Rules

Due to the ongoing pandemic the Anson County Writers' Club has changed its usual format to all-electronic entries for 2020. Entries will be limited to high school and adult submissions, and all entry fees are waived.

Submissions in Word should be emailed to: info@ansoncountywritersclub.org with "contest" in the subject line. By submitting, the writer is giving permission for their work to be included in the Club's anthology, "Anson Pathways." There should be three attachments: A cover sheet giving the name of the writer and the category they are entering, such as John Smith, Poetry, (Name of) High School, or Jane Doe, Prose, Adult; and two copies of the work, one with no contact information and one with the writer's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address. Prose entries are limited to 2,000 words and poetry to no more than 32 lines.

A complete list of rules can be found on the Club's website, www.ansoncountywritersclub.org. Failure to follow the rules may result in an entry being disqualified. Winners will be announced in February 2021.

The contest is open until 5:00 p.m. on December 7, 2020.

Countdown to College - October 2020

North Carolina's annual campaign to support college access is during the month of October and is named NC Countdown to College. Activities during the month support high school seniors in completing three important college enrollment steps: 1) residency, 2) FAFSA, and 3) applications.

What is traditionally called College Application Week has been extended to two weeks this year: October 19 - 30. During these weeks, many NC colleges and universities waive their application fees.

Students can get information from their school.

Anson County's Unemployment Rate Dropped to 8% in August

Anson County's unemployment rate for August was 8%. That was down from July's 10% rate. The June rate was 7.9%, May's rate was 10.1% and April's rate was 8.2%. In March the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%. Statewide the unemployment rate was 6.8% in August, down from July's 8.9% rate

In August 2019 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%, and statewide the rate was 4.3%.

Anson's total labor force in August was 10,473. Of that number 9,638 were employed and 835 were unemployed. In July the total labor force was 10,565, with 9,509 employed and 1,056 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in all 100 of North Carolina's counties in August. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 11.6 percent, while Camden and Watauga Counties each had the lowest at 4.6 percent.

All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases. Among the metro areas, Fayetteville and Rocky Mount each had the highest rate at 9.1 percent and New Bern had the lowest at 5.9 percent. The August not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 6.8 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in all 100 counties. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in August by 22,848 to 4,485,131, while those unemployed decreased by 108,798 to 327,976. Since August 2019, the number of workers employed statewide decreased 379,491, while those unemployed increased 117,769.



Anson County Arts Council October Spotlight is on Margaret Wall Goins

Margaret Wall Goins was born and raised in Anson County. She taught with Anson County Schools and Open Doors Center for Children for over 45 years. She was married to John Goins and has two daughters, Caroline and Elizabeth.

Margaret's passion for the arts comes from her family. Her mom, Celeste, owned a craft store in Morven where she would help teach classes. She also taught painting at Anson Tech (now SPCC). Margaret continues to be involved in the Morven Community Choir and supports the arts however she can.

Margaret has been a generous contributor to the Anson County Arts Council, and makes the most delicious cakes that she regularly donates to the Bach's Lunch Summer Series.

The Anson County Arts Council says, "We are so grateful for all the gifts she shares with us! We love you, Margaret! The spotlight is on YOU!"

Governor Cooper Moves North Carolina to Phase 3 on October 2 With Stable Numbers

Safety precautions set for large outdoor and some indoor venues

North Carolina will ease cautiously some restrictions while continuing safety measures to combat the spread of COVID-19 as the state's metrics remained stable in September, Governor Roy Cooper announced on September 30.

"Our top priority remains getting children back to in-person learning. This month marks a major shift for many families now and in the coming months as schools open their doors, some for the first time since the pandemic," said Governor Cooper. "The virus continues to spread, so we must take the next steps methodically, and responsibly."

"We must continue our hard work to slow the spread of this virus," said Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. "By practicing the 3Ws — wear, wait and wash, — getting your flu shot, and downloading the SlowCOVIDNC app, each of us can protect the progress we have made."

Dr. Cohen reviewed the state's key metrics:

- **Trajectory in COVID-Like Illness (CLI) Surveillance Over 14 Days** North Carolina's syndromic surveillance trend for COVID-like illness has a slight increase.
- **Trajectory of Confirmed Cases Over 14 Days** North Carolina's trajectory of lab-confirmed cases is level.
- **Trajectory in Percent of Tests Returning Positive Over 14 Days** North Carolina's trajectory in percent of tests returning positive is level.
- **Trajectory in Hospitalizations Over 14 Days** North Carolina's trajectory of hospitalizations is level.

In addition to these metrics, the state continues building capacity to adequately respond to an increase in virus spread in testing, tracing and prevention.

No-cost testing events are being deployed across the state and testing turnaround times are improving. New contact tracers are bolstering the efforts of local health departments. A new NCDHHS app, SlowCOVIDNC, is notifying users of exposure to the virus. Personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies are stable.

As these metrics and capacity remain stable, the state will ease some restrictions starting Friday. Executive Order 169 begins Oct. 2 at 5 p.m. and continues for three weeks through October 23. Its new provisions include:

- Large outdoor venues with seating greater than 10,000 may operate with 7% occupancy for spectators.
- Smaller outdoor entertainment venues, like arenas or amphitheaters, may operate outdoors at 30% of outdoor capacity, or 100 guests, whichever is less.
- Movie theaters and conference centers may open indoor spaces to 30% of capacity, or 100 guests, whichever is less.
- Bars may operate outdoors at 30% of outdoor capacity, or 100 guests, whichever is less.
- Amusement parks may open at 30% occupancy, outdoor attractions only.
- The limits on mass gatherings will remain at 25 people indoors and 50 people outdoors.
- The 11 pm curfew on alcohol sales for in-person consumption in locations such as restaurants and outdoor bars will be extended to October 23.

State and public health officials will continue watching the key COVID-19 trends over the next several weeks to determine if any further restrictions can be eased when the current Executive Order expires October 23.

Medicare Beneficiaries Urged to Compare Plans During Open Enrollment

NC Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey reminds Medicare beneficiaries to compare and evaluate their current plans and make necessary changes during the annual Open Enrollment Period, Oct. 15 – Dec. 7, 2020. Medicare plans and prices change. It is important for Medicare beneficiaries to take advantage of the Open Enrollment Period by contacting local Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) counselors to save money, improve coverage or both.

The Open Enrollment Period begins Oct. 15 and runs for eight weeks to give consumers enough time to review and make changes to their Medicare coverage. Changes must be made by Dec. 7, 2020 to guarantee coverage will begin without interruption Jan. 1, 2021.

It's important to contact local SHIIP counselors before making a decision about coverage because beneficiaries may be able to receive more affordable and better Medicare health and/or drug plan options. For example, even if they are satisfied with their current Medicare Advantage or Part D plan, there may be another plan in their area that covers health care and/or drugs at a better price.

SHIIP is a division of the North Carolina Department of Insurance and offers free, unbiased information about Medicare, Medicare prescription drug coverage, Medicare Advantage, long-term care insurance and other health insurance issues. In addition to helping Medicare beneficiaries compare and enroll in plans during the Open Enrollment Period, SHIIP counselors can help people discover if they are eligible for Medicare cost savings programs.

Here are some of the ways to review and compare plans available for 2021:

- Get one-on-one help from beneficiaries' local SHIIP office. In Anson County call Grace Senior Center at 704-694-6616.
- Get one-on-one help from SHIIP, the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program at NCDI, by calling 1-855-408-1212, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Visit www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan to compare current coverage with all of the options available, and enroll in a new plan if it is advantageous to do so.
- Review the Medicare & You handbook. It was mailed to Medicare recipients in September.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) 24-hours a day, seven days a week, to find out more about coverage options. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

For more information about SHIIP and the Medicare Open Enrollment Period, call 1-855-408-1212 or visit www.ncshiip.com.

HOPE Grief Support Goup at Harmony Community Church

This is a release from Harmony Community Church: HOPE is a grief support group at Harmony Community Church in Peachland. HOPE stands for Healing Of Painful Emotions. They invite you to join them if you are feeling grief or loss from: loss of a loved one; divorce or separation; abandoned by a parent or husband; loss of job; loss of house; loss of pet; or anything causing you to grieve or feel loss.

Grief happens for many reasons and is a natural part of life that we all must walk through at some time. HOPE grief support group helps you work through the many stages of grief. They are not counselors, but are there to help you through the daily heartaches. They are there to listen if you want to talk or to provide guidance from their daily lives and experiences. They begin with prayer and devotion.

HOPE invites you to join them. There is no cost to join the group. Everything is strictly confidential. Tuesday nights at 6:30 p.m. at Harmony Community Church, located at 1984 Pulpwood Yard Road in Peachland. For information or to register call Norma at 704-272-7127 and leave a message or Donna at 704-242-2499.

Community Outreach Offers Household Items on Saturday

The Lamb of God Church in Wadesboro will hold a Community Outreach Event this Saturday, October 10 at 10 a.m. They are offering household items and paper products on a first come, first served basis.

The event will be held at 118 West Wade Street in Wadesboro.

If you would like to donate or volunteer for the event, please call 843-623-3777. The website is www.logomchurch.com.

Auditions for Upcoming Play Fruit Cakes

The Ansonia Theatre will hold auditions on Tuesday, October 13 at 6 p.m. for the play, *Fruit Cakes*. The play will run December 11 to 20. Be prepared to read from the script.

The auditions will take place at the Anson County Arts Council, located at 110 South Rutherford Street in Wadesboro (next door to the Ansonia).

For more information call 704-694-4950.

Uptown Wadesboro, Inc. Continues Its Brick Paver Fundraiser

Uptown Wadesboro, Inc. is again offering the opportunity to purchase laser-engraved brick pavers to honor the memory of someone special, recognize an organization, a business or high school graduating class. The pavers will be placed at the location of your choosing in the uptown area as a lasting tribute.

The bricks come in two sizes, the four-inch brick will accommodate three lines of print and costs \$50, and the eight-inch brick will allow for six lines of print and costs \$100. Clip art may also be added to enhance your brick for free.

You may download the Brick Paver Order Form by going to: uptownwadesboro.com and click on Brochures and Registration Forms and then look for the Brick Paver Form. You may also pick up a form at the REV Uptown, located at 114 West Wade Street.

For more information please call the Uptown Wadesboro office at 704-694-4181 ext. 3.

Upcoming Event at Grace Senior Center

- **Eat Better, Eat Together**

Tuesday, October 20, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, a Goodie Bag Handout
Grace Senior Center is located at 199 Highway 742 South in Wadesboro, just past IGA. For more info call 704-694-6616.