

Mobile Health Clinic Offers Health Care for You and Your Family

The Atrium Mobile Health Clinic operates two days a week in Anson County. No appointments are necessary, walk-ins only. Please wear a mask.

From treating minor injuries like sprains and cuts, to diagnosing long-term diseases like diabetes, the mobile clinic provides health care services in state-of-the-art mobile care units. They welcome patients age 2 and up.

• Every 2nd & 4th Monday of the month, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at HOLLA! Community Center, located at 229 East Main Street in Morven

• Every 1st & 3rd Monday of the month, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Burnsville Fire Station, located at 13380 Highway 742 North.

The Mobile Health Clinic offers diagnosis and treatment for:

- Short-term health problems like sprains, cuts and infections, including flu and strep throat.
- Long-lasting diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and arthritis.
- Minor injuries, like sprains and cuts.

Additional wellness services offered are:

- Help connecting with resources for non-health care needs, such as food and transportation assistance.
- Some recommended screenings and procedures will be referred to Atrium Health facilities in the area.

Need care but can't pay? They can help.

Visit AtriumHealth.org/MobileHealth for more information and location updates.

Church

NOVEMBER 23

Free Senior Citizen Thanksgiving Meal at Harmony Community Church at 12:00 noon. Info 704-272-7410. Located at 1984 Pulpwood Yard Rd in Peachland.

NOVEMBER 24
Friends & Family Day
At East Rock Ford Missionary Baptist Church, 2pm with Rev. Dr. James Parsons. Free take-out meal of thanks after program. All are invited. No Sunday School or worship service that day.

DECEMBER 1

Men's Day Program
At Divine Unity House of Restoration Ministries, 6090 Hwy 109 S, Wadesboro, 11am with Pastor Albert Bennett, Pastor of House of Judah I.F. Ministries in Rockingham.

DECEMBER 7

Giveaway
50 Winter self-care kits (socks, gloves, etc.) for those in need while supplies last, at White Oak Grove Church in Morven, 10am-1pm.

DECEMBER 8

Memory Tree & Christmas Program 6pm at Bethany Freewill Baptist Church on Old Lilesville Road in Wadesboro. Finger foods will follow.

DECEMBER 22

Christmas Program
2:30pm at Divine Unity House of Restoration Ministries Fellowship Hall, 3760 Hwy 109 S, Wadesboro.

ONGOING

HOPE Grief Support Group at Harmony Community Church, meets Tuesdays at 5:30pm offering help for anyone suffering from grief, like death, sickness, divorce, separation from family, job, etc.. Free & confidential, everyone welcome. Come join others experiencing grief. We will pray with you. Info 704-272-7127. Located at 1984 Pulpwood Yard Rd in Peachland

Community Singing
Last Sunday of each month at New Life Ministries, Hwy 109 S (Trexler Dr). Sunday School 10am, Singing 11am. Community is invited to come & sing! Info Pastor Randy Brooks 910-544-9232.

Saturday Services
Lighthouse Ministries holds services every Saturday at 11am. Located at 311 Birchwood Dr in Wadesboro. The Pastor is Terry Taylor & Assistant Pastor is Lawanda Rodgers. For info call 704-465-1757.

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All items are for personal use only, not for resale.

Events

NOVEMBER 21

Free Food

Anson Mobile Food Market 4:00 p.m. at Lilesville Baptist Church, located at 118 Camden St in Lilesville. Fresh veggies, fruit & bread if available. Blood pressure checks, along with healthy living topics & booths. Nothing required to receive food, just come! Sponsored by Anson Extension Service.

NOVEMBER 25

NAACP Meeting They invited you to attend. 6:30pm at Ebenezer Baptist Church, located at 612 Salisbury Street in Wadesboro. They welcome everyone. For info: Sinic Marsh mrshs6@yahoo.com or 704-254-0630.

ONGOING EVENTS

Compassionate Friends Meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7pm, at the Training Room at First Baptist Church, Lee Avenue in Wadesboro. Bereaved parents, family and friends who have lost a child of any age are invited. Info 704-694-2425

Direct and Counter Cyclical Program Sign-ups

Call the Farm Service Agency Office at 704-694-3516 ext. 2 to complete eligibility forms.

Senior Box Program at Feed My Lambs starts the third Tuesday each month for seniors only. Located at 2290 Hwy 74 West, Wadesboro. 704-695-1820.

Food Pantry

Free food every Wed, 9-11am at Burnsville Recreation & Learning Ctr. 704-826-8182.

You Decide: Is the Economy Passing Its Annual Evaluation?

Most of us - especially senior citizens like me - have a yearly medical evaluation. In fact, I just had mine, and my doctor was mostly pleased overall. Sure, I have some aches and pains - mainly in my knees - but most of my key metrics are in the normal range, especially for someone in their mid-70s.

In today's column I'll switch roles. Rather than being the patient evaluated by a medical doctor, I'll be the doctor analyzing a much bigger patient - the U.S. economy. What kind of evaluation will our economy receive? Like me, is the economy in fairly good shape, but with some aches and pains? Or are there some big problems that may need surgery? After my evaluation, I'll let you decide.

Just as we check blood pressure, pulse and body temperature in people, we can look at key health measurements for the economy. My list includes four measures: aggregate production, total employment, the unemployment rate and "real" worker earnings. As with human health, economists like to look at both the current economic levels and any recent changes in the measures.

Aggregate production, where the output of all products and services in the economy is combined, is measured by a concept called real gross domestic product, often shortened to just GDP. GDP is currently at a record high of \$23 trillion. However, GDP normally increases with population growth and improvements in worker productivity. Most economists track the annual growth rate of GDP, which is currently 2.8%. Ironically, exactly the same rate was recorded immediately before the pandemic hit in 2020. Still, economists note there has been a modest downward trend in the GDP's growth rate in recent decades, and many attribute this trend to smaller gains in worker productivity over the same time period.

Employment both in the country and North Carolina is also at record levels. Both economies quickly recovered the jobs temporarily lost during the pandemic and then resumed the job growth that was occurring prior to the pandemic.

However, recently there has been a slowdown in job growth, with the monthly increase falling short of the number needed to accommodate new individuals entering the workforce. Consequently, the jobless rate both nationally and in North Carolina has risen to the low 4% range in 2024 from the low 3% range in 2023. However, historically 4% is a low jobless rate.

Household income is also a big part of our everyday economy. With numerous measures of household income, comparisons can be confusing. My favorite measure is the average real weekly earnings of workers. The measure compares over time what the average worker earns weekly. But instead of comparing the actual dollar values, the dollar values are first adjusted for what each dollar can buy. In other words, the comparisons are of the purchasing power of weekly earnings, meaning they account for price inflation.

Comparing today to four years ago, the purchasing power of workers' average weekly earnings is 3% lower. This means workers are still behind in what they can purchase when confronted with higher prices. But this measure has improved. A year ago the average worker's purchasing power was 5.5% lower than in early 2021.

I would rate this diagnosis of the economy as "fairly good, but with room for improvement," which is about what my doctor told me about my personal health. But just like my doctor did for me, there's another evaluation that needs to be done to look at the long run. While my health may be good now, am I potentially headed for something bad in the future, like diabetes or a heart attack? Let's do the same kind of evaluation for the economy.

The first worry is the national debt, which has grown enormously in the last decade. Measured against the size of the economy, today's national debt is the highest ever. Just as concerning is the fact that there appears to be no end in sight for increasing the national debt. Trillion dollar annual deficits - which add to the national debt - have become common in the federal budget. Also, during the recent presidential campaign, neither major candidate offered a plan for containing the national debt.

One of the observable impacts of the national debt is its effect on interest rates. Those involved in the financial markets know that an increasing national debt creates more borrowing by the federal government. Increased public borrowing competes with normal private borrowing, with the ultimate result being higher interest rates. Indeed, since the Federal Reserve's recent interest rate cut, some interest rates have actually increased rather than decreased. And higher interest rates translate into reduced ability for businesses and households to borrow.

Another sleeping long-run concern is regulations. In the last five decades federal regulations more than doubled. While many regulations are well-meaning, they do create additional costs for businesses. Economic research has found a link between more regulations and slower growth in worker productivity. Modest improvements in productivity cost businesses revenue and workers money in their paychecks.

The third potential long-run problem I see is education and training for the future economy dominated by artificial intelligence (AI). While there is much discussion about where AI will take us and the capabilities it will provide, I don't hear enough about how formal education and training will need to be revamped so millions of workers are not left without a job. We need to have these discussions now, because AI is rapidly expanding and being applied in vast parts of the economy. Before we know it, AI will be a big part of our lives, especially our work, or nonwork (!) lives.

I walked away from my recent medical evaluation with a smile on my face. All of my health systems are operating smoothly now. But my doctor warned me there are a couple of things I should consider changing now to avoid something really bad when I hit my 80s, or even if I'm lucky, my 90s. I listened and agreed. Should we apply the same advice to the economy? You decide.

Mike Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus at North Carolina State University.

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