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

Covid Update for Anson County

Health Dept. walk-in clinics now on Thursdays only.

The latest information posted by the Anson County Health Department on Tuesday, February 8 there were 6,294 total Covid-19 cases, with 408 active and 91 deaths. On February 1 there were 6,164 cases, with 488 active and 90 deaths.

Vaccines are available for everyone 5 years old and older, including walk-in clinics. (Children 5-11 by appointment only.) Vaccine boosters are available. They are free, and all you have to do is call the Health Department at 704-694-5188 for more information. Walk-in clinics are held on Thursdays, 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m. The Health Department is located at 110 West Ashe Street in Wadesboro.

Covid Testing Free testing is available Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. without an appointment. They are closed for lunch 12 noon to 1 p.m. Testing takes place in the old hospital parking lot at 500 Morven Road in Wadesboro. No appointment is needed and there is no charge for the Covid test. Results will be called or emailed directly to the person tested or, in the case of children, to their parent or adult caregiver, in 2-3 days. They will test anyone over the age of 1.

Free home Covid tests are available by mail. The government has set up a website (www.covidtests.gov) or call 1-800-232-0233.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported that statewide as of Tuesday, February 8 there were 4,648 new cases of Covid, with 21,325 deaths and 3,956 hospitalized. Cases continue the dramatic drop from 31,902 new cases reported on January 18. On February 8 75% of adults in NC had one dose of vaccine, 71% had both doses.

NC Families Encouraged to File Federal Income Taxes to Access Full Benefits of the Child Tax Credit

Visit ChildTaxCredit.gov for tools and help filing

With tax season quickly approaching, North Carolina families are encouraged to file their federal income taxes to ensure they access their full, expanded Child Tax Credit, as well as other federal benefits. Many families received about half of their tax credit payments in monthly payments in 2021 but will receive the rest of the money they are owed by filing their federal income taxes this year. The Child Tax Credit is fully refundable, meaning that even families who owe little or no federal tax should still file to get their credits.

"The expanded Child Tax Credit has benefited more than two million children in North Carolina with the monthly payments lifting many of them out of poverty," said Governor Roy Cooper. "We encourage families to file a tax return to make sure they claim their full credits to help them with food, housing and education, and we have resources to help them with filing."

Feb. 8 is the Child Tax Credit Day of Action, and the Governor's Office, in collaboration with state and federal agencies, is raising awareness of this important issue and linking families to needed resources. Families can visit ChildTaxCredit.gov to learn more about the Child Tax Credit, find out if they are eligible and receive help with filing taxes.

"The expansion of the Child Tax Credit has already helped many North Carolina families make ends meet," said NCDHHS Secretary Kody H. Kinsley. "The monthly payments have kept children out of poverty and helped families meet basic needs. Ensuring that families receive the full benefits is the next important step to keeping our families safe and well."

The Child Tax Credit is a refundable tax credit that people can receive when they file their federal income tax returns. The Child Tax Credit was increased and expanded in 2021 by the American Rescue Plan, and most families are eligible to receive the credit for their children. For families with children, the 2021 Child Tax Credit is \$3,000-\$3,600 per child, based on their age. Most people need to file a tax return before April 18, 2022, to receive their full credit this year.

The Center on Budget & Policy Priorities estimates more than 100,000 North Carolina children, including newborns, live in families who are likely to need assistance in claiming the Child Tax Credit. Making sure those families receive the full amount that they are eligible for will provide \$337 million to families in North Carolina.

Free resources available to assist with tax preparation include:

- **VITA** is a program run by IRS partner organizations that offers free tax help to individuals with low to moderate incomes. Visit www.getyourrefund.org/en/vita_providers to find a location.
- **United Way MyFreeTaxes** offers full-service tax return preparation for individuals who earn up to \$58,000; offers those who earn less than \$73,000 an option to file their tax returns directly online with a hotline for support; and offers a do-it-yourself option with no income limit. www.unitedway.org/myfreetaxes/unitedway
- **Free File** is a service from the IRS that provides information about how to get your federal tax return filed for free. www.irs.gov/filing/free-file-do-your-federal-taxes-for-free

Free Vaccination Clinic at the Anson Animal Shelter Saturday

The public is invited to bring their cats and dogs to the Anson Animal Shelter this Saturday, February 12 for free vaccinations. The event will take place in the parking lot from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

There will be another March Clinic on Saturday, March 26 that will include free microchips. It also runs from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Shelter Director Maureen Lett said, "Petco Love awarded grant funds to the Anson Animal Shelter for providing the free vaccinations. I have used some of the funds to purchase microchips and will distribute 2 free chips per household. Each additional chip after the first two free ones can be purchased at \$5 per chip. The chips include lifetime registration."

For more information or questions you can call Maureen Lett at 704-994-2738 or email mlett@ansoncountync.gov.

Valentine's Day is coming! Here's a column written by Melanie Lyon about that special day. This was originally published on February 13, 2008.

Dare to Delve and Discover, Become A Detective, Darling!

All of you have a "fave" holiday, occasion or circumstance that makes your heart pump a little harder and your step a little lighter. Favorites stimulate the senses and make you feel good even on the worst of the worst days.

Valentine's Day is, for what it's worth, my favorite special day. February 14 is not a date occupied with fervent shopping, long to do lists or significant hoopla that sometimes encompasses other holidays, events and occasions. It's just an adorable day satiated with pretty colors like pink, pink and more pink (another favorite) and usually carries with it lovely sentiments. Wine and roses, candy and cards, or diamonds and gold are often typical favors and do provide that warm and fuzzy feeling. But I must say one of the warmest, fuzziest feelings I ever experienced was from none of the above mentioned. No, it came by way of three dance classes for a grand \$10 deal! So the thrills and chills one would expect from expensive gifts were actually realized from a ten dollar bill, some not-so-fancy footwork on the dance floor and carried more value for me than a diamond encrusted tiara. And even though it has been a while, I still remember those classes with sheer delight. Factor in that someone was actually attuned to my thoughts and feelings make the event even more distinctive.

The trick is to discover your special someone's favorites and share those rather than the traditional. It was a wise person who said, "When you speak you repeat what you already know, but when you listen you

learn." With that said, make someone truly happy by giving them a heart grabbing ear to ear grin with not so much mullah spent it flattens the wallet or empties the purse. Use a smidgen of creativity, listen intently and find that your guy or gal may surprise you with just how little it takes to intrigue them. Part of their charm, after all, is their unique individuality so don't just give him or her any old trinket requiring no thought provoking exploration. Delve into their minds, their souls, become a detective!

And since tomorrow is Valentine's Day, bear with me as I send sappy sentiments to all my family, friends and loved ones. Hopefully you'll receive the unique charms you deserve, like finding a love note in your lunch, on the refrigerator door or in the seat of your car, bubbles in your bath, a container filled with hand-written daily blessings, pennies from Heaven, heads up of course, poetry composed especially for you, a smile and a hug at the door after a long day's work, a favorite song on the radio, warm cover for your afternoon nap, a heart drawn through the steam on your bathroom mirror, or whatever you, in your uniqueness feel passionate about for a perfectly pleasing day.

Take note of the words spoken by those significant in your lives and listen to their hearts when words are left unsaid. You may discover something that proves invaluable. And hey, it doesn't have to be a special occasion either, but happy Valentine's Day nevertheless.

By Melanie Morse

This is National Burn Awareness Week - Cook with Care

In recognition of 2022 National Burn Awareness Week, Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey encourages families to practice safe-cooking habits. National Burn Awareness Week runs Feb. 6-12. This year's theme from the American Burn Association is "Burning Issues in the Kitchen."

"Almost half of all home fires are caused by cooking and many of those fires are preventable by simply being safer in the kitchen," said Commissioner Causey. "Burn Awareness Week is an opportunity for us all to take time to learn how we can prevent injuries and deaths caused by burns."

Burn injuries continue to be one of the leading causes of accidental death and injury throughout the country. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 1.1 million people suffer burn injuries that require medical attention every year in the United States.

To prevent injuries and deaths caused by burns in the kitchen, State Fire Marshal Causey offers these safety tips:

- Prevent splatter burns. When frying, use a pan lid to prevent splatter burns.
- Keep your stovetop clear. Always wipe clean the stove, oven and exhaust fan to prevent grease buildup.
- Dress appropriately. Wear short or close-fitting sleeves when cooking to avoid a burn.
- Stay alert. The best time to cook is when you are wide awake and not drowsy from medications or alcohol.
- Never leave the stove unattended. Stay in the kitchen while you are frying, grilling or broiling food. If you leave, turn off the stove.
- Keep children safe in the kitchen. Have a "kid-free-zone" of at least three feet around the stove and areas where hot food or drink is prepared or carried.
- Monitor your appliances. After cooking, check the kitchen to make sure all burners and other appliances are turned off.

Most "fire-related injuries" are burns. In fact, approximately every 60 seconds, someone in the U.S. sustains a burn serious enough to require treatment, according to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Almost one-third of all burn injuries occur in children under the age of 15.

To prevent burns from fires and scalding, State Fire Marshal Causey offers these safety tips:

- Install and maintain smoke alarms in your home — on every floor and near all rooms where family members sleep. Test your smoke alarms once a month to make sure they are working properly.
- Create and practice a family fire escape plan and involve kids in the planning. Make sure everyone knows at least two ways out of every room and identify a central meeting place outside.
- Check water heater temperature and make sure to set your water heater's thermostat to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or lower.

For more information and safety tips, visit the OSFM website: ncosfm.gov/community-risk-reduction/fire-prevention-education/cooking.

Animal Shelter Needs Volunteers - Would You Like to Help?

The Animal Shelter depends on the help of volunteers to ensure that animal residents receive love and care. More volunteers will also help relieve the workload on staff which can result in more time for resident animals to be adopted before they are euthanized (put to sleep). Please consider volunteering. For more information on helping or making a donation, call 704-994-2738.

Consider adopting A rescue from Animal Shelter can bring lots of happiness and love into any home...and you will make the animal happy too! It's a win-win.

And remember, older animals need a home and love too!

Anson County Schools Covid Dashboard					February 4, 2022	
Location/Site	Quarantined Students	Quarantined Employees	Positive Cases Students	Positive Cases Employees		
Anson Early College High School	3	0	7	1		
Anson High School	17	2	1	1		
Anson Middle School	21	4	9	1		
Ansonville Elementary	8	3	4	3		
Lilesville Elementary	4	1	2	1		
Morven Elementary	5	0	1	0		
Peachland-Polkton Elementary	3	1	6	1		
Wadesboro Elementary	3	1	2	1		
Wadesboro Primary	8	0	2	0		
District Office	N/A	0	N/A	0		
Transportation	N/A	0	N/A	1		
Maintenance	N/A	0	N/A	1		
Child Nutrition/Cafeteria Employees	N/A	2	N/A	1		
Total	72	14	34	12		
Total Students + Employees	86		46			
*Student Enrollment as of 02/04/22	2,944	# of Employees	513			
*Enrollment changes daily		% of Employees Positive	2.34%			
% of Students Positive	1.15%	A link to the dashboard is on the Anson County Schools Facebook page.				

AARP Tax Services at Grace Senior Center are Not Available this Year

AARP tax return help is available in Albemarle

This is a release from the Grace Senior Center: AARP will not be providing tax services in Anson County this year. However, anyone from Anson county can go to Albemarle for help from AARP. Here is information:

- Call the application line at 704-986-3813. Leave your name and phone number. Be sure to say that you are from Anson County.
- You will receive a return call to set up an appointment and be provided with additional information.
- There are no morning appointments available, only afternoons. Tuesdays and Thursdays, during the hours of 12:30 to 3:30 p.m.
- Representatives will try to complete and present each tax return back on the same day, during the visit.

It's Girl Scout Cookie Time!

For over 100 years, Girl Scouts have been selling cookies to help finance troop activities including meetings, camping and other outdoor adventures, program outings and community service projects. This year Anson Girl Scouts from Troop 1389 have learned about international cuisine, woodworking and textile arts. Activities included camping at a local state park, visiting the zoo, attending a theatre event, riding horses at the Outer Banks and participating in community service events such as the Young Professionals of Anson Day of Caring and a food drive for Anson Crisis Ministry.

Cynthia Hassell, the troop's Cookie Manager, noted "When selling cookies our Girl Scouts also learn how to run a small business - from customer service to inventory, money-handling to marketing...life skills that will serve them well into adulthood."

Girl Scout Troop 1389 is the only active troop right now in Anson County for Anson County girls in grades K-12. The troop meets in Peachland two to three times a month, but its members live throughout Anson County including White Store, Morven, Wadesboro, Peachland and Polkton.

Cookie booths will be open in Wadesboro on Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Parsons Drug Company on the Square, and the front parking lot at Anson Station Shopping Center on Highway 74. Booths will be open through February 26. The sale may be extended to March 5 depending on the weather and cookie availability. There is a limited supply of some flavors this year, including Samoas, S'mores and the new caramel-brownie inspired Adventurefuls.

For information about Girl Scouts

- Call 704-731-6500
- Or visit the website: www.hngirlscouts.org.

The Express is on the web at www.TheExpressNewspaper.com