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ANSON COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN
cultivating young minds since 1996

Enjoy the special supplement in this week's edition, celebrating 25 years of the Anson County Partnership for Children

"Growing up here, I've always been proud of what this caring community can accomplish when we work together for the common good. This community fought to ensure the founding of the Anson County Partnership for Children more than 25 years ago. By working together, we have accomplished many objectives that benefit children, families and the community.

In celebration of our 25th anniversary, we have collaborated with The Express Newspaper to emphasize the programs, events, and a few of the many people we treasure. Although it is impossible to share the complete rich history, we are ecstatic to share highlights.

Humbled by the involvement of so many community leaders and volunteers, I thank you. Thank you for caring about the success of all our Anson County children. The Anson County Partnership would not be established and stable in the community without you."

Caroline Goins, Executive Director of the Anson County Partnership for Children

2,342 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Monday, March 8 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 2,342 reported cases of COVID-19. 54 of those cases were active. At that point they had discharged 2,288 cases, 2,234 to baseline health and 54 deaths.

Anson County Health Department Director Fred Thompson, PhD gave this update:

"The Health Department is pleased to announce that we are accepting appointments, effective immediately, from all of our local frontline essential workers for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

Over the last two months we have made significant progress administering the COVID vaccine to Group 1, healthcare workers, Group 2, the 65 and over, and K-12 staff and child care workers in Group 3. We are pleased to be able to expand Group 3 to include all of our local essential frontline workers.

The majority of people who are working will fit into one of the 19 categories of essential frontline workers on the registration form. Please encourage all of our dedicated frontline workers to fill out the registration form and email it to: covidregistration@co.anson.nc.us. Once we receive the completed registration form, we will register the individual in the state's online portal, the Covid Vaccine Management System (CVMS), and contact them to schedule their appointment to get the vaccine.

The county has set up a direct link to the registration form on the county government home page, www.co.anson.nc.us. You can also request the form via email at covidregistration@co.anson.nc.us or by calling the Health Department at 704-694-5188.

People who do not have an active email account can drop off the completed registration form in our drop box located at the front door of the Health Department, located at 110 Ashe Street in Wadesboro. Or they can call us at (704) 694-5188, press 1, and we will take their information over the phone."

Thompson continued, "We continue to vaccinate at the EMS base on Country Club Road. Two lanes are set up - one is for people receiving their first dose and the other is for people getting their second dose. When people get their first dose they will be scheduled for their second dose before they leave.

"One question we are getting asked is when will be have the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine. At this time we have not been notified if, or when, we will allocated any of the Johnson & Johnson single dose vaccine."

Thompson concluded, "Please assist us in getting the word out to all our essential frontline workers, and we will open to Group 4, adults with high risk of exposure and increased risk of severe illness, on or before March 24."

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported statewide as of Monday, March 8 there were 1,228 new cases of COVID-19, with 11,535 deaths and 1,126 hospitalized.

Statewide, as of Monday, March 1 there were 862,170 total cases of COVID-19, with 11,254 deaths, 10,291,482 completed tests and 1,219 hospitalized. February 22 there were 844,770 total cases of COVID-19, with 10,934 deaths, 9,964,355 completed tests and 1,567 hospitalized. February 1 there were 761,302 total cases of COVID-19, with 9,342 deaths, 8,908,258 tests and 2,781 hospitalized. January 25 - 723,445 cases of COVID-19, 8,720 deaths, 8,500,479 completed tests and 3,287 hospitalized. January 4 - 570,111 cases of COVID-19, 6,941 deaths, 7,119,201 completed tests and 3,192 hospitalized. December 7 - 404,032 cases of COVID-19, 5,605 deaths, 5,678,794 tests and 2,373 hospitalized. November 2 - 278,028 cases of COVID-19, 4,390 deaths, 4,116,019 completed tests and 1,146 hospitalized. October 5 - 219,754 cases of COVID-19, 3,637 deaths, 3,188,371 completed tests and 971 hospitalized.

Recent history in Anson County: March 31 - 1 case; April 28 - 23 cases (no deaths); May 26 - 62 cases (1 death); June 22 - 107 cases (2 deaths); July 27 - 285 cases (2 deaths); August 3 - 306 cases (2 deaths); August 31 - 440 cases (4 deaths); September 4 - 461 cases (4 deaths); September 28 - 605 cases (4 deaths); October 5 - 649 cases (6 deaths); October 26 - 720 cases (9 deaths); November 2 - 738 cases (11 deaths); November 30 - 937 cases (14 deaths); December 7 - 1,029 cases (18 deaths); December 31 - 1,444 cases; (28 deaths) January 4 - 1,524 cases (28 deaths); January 25 - 1,957 cases (42 deaths); February 1 - 2,056 cases (45 deaths); February 22 - 2,258 (53 deaths); March 1 - 2,298 cases (53 deaths).

New Covid Vaccine Priority for People with Disabilities

People with Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) are now explicitly included in prioritized populations for the COVID-19 vaccine in North Carolina, according to an announcement by Governor Roy Cooper.

Any individuals with I/DD receiving 30 days or more of home and community based services (HCBS) can schedule a vaccine now. Other individuals with I/DD who do not yet qualify for the vaccine can start scheduling vaccine appointments on March 24.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services also shared clarifications for Groups 1 and 4. The definition of long-term care in Group 1 has been updated for people with intellectual and developmental disability. Higher-risk medical conditions for Group 4 include intellectual and developmental disabilities including Down Syndrome, and neurologic conditions, such as dementia, per the announcement.

Governor Cooper Reminds North Carolinians to Prepare and Practice for Severe Weather

Governor Declares March 7-13 Severe Weather Preparedness Week

Governor Roy Cooper has declared March 7-13 Severe Weather Preparedness Week and urges North Carolinians to prepare and practice safety plans in case severe weather strikes. Severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are not unusual in North Carolina, and while spring is the most active season for severe weather, the recent thunderstorms that resulted in a deadly tornado prove they can happen anytime of the year. "All North Carolinians need to prepare for severe weather, especially severe thunderstorms and tornados," Governor Cooper said. "We have seen the devastation and deadly results these storms can bring. Having a preparedness plan, an emergency kit and a way to stay alert to weather reports will help protect you and your loved ones."

On Wednesday, March 10 at 9:30 a.m. there will be a statewide tornado drill. This year, North Carolinians are being asked to practice their emergency plan using COVID-19 safety precautions. For those working remotely or at your place of employment, go to the lowest floor and the most interior room of the building you're in, while wearing a mask and staying at least 6-feet away from people with whom you don't live. Test messages will be broadcast via the Emergency Alert System on radio and TV and on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radios.

"We recognize the challenges of holding a tornado drill in the workplace during COVID. If possible, hold the drill in small groups at different times, where social distancing can be maintained but still allows everyone to have the experience. The drill is a great way to practice what to do when severe weather strikes," said Emergency Management Director Mike Sprayberry.

North Carolina is no stranger to severe weather. In February, Brunswick County was hit by a strong tornado that killed three people and destroyed or damaged numerous homes. In 2020, North Carolina recorded 48 tornado touchdowns, including one that spun up as a result of Hurricane Isaias in Bertie County, leaving two people dead. There were also 247 flood or flash flood events across the state and 609 severe thunderstorms with damaging winds or hail of 1-inch or larger.

Tornadoes form during severe thunderstorms when winds change direction and increase in speed. These storms can produce large hail and damaging winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. A tornado can develop rapidly with little warning, so having a plan in place will allow you to respond quickly.

Emergency Management officials recommend the following safety tips:

- ø Develop a family emergency plan so each member knows what to do, where to go and who to call during an emergency.
- ø If thunder roars, go indoors! Lightning is close enough to strike you.
- ø Know where the nearest safe room is, such as a basement or interior room away from windows.
- ø Know the terms: WATCH means severe weather is possible. WARNING means severe weather is occurring; take shelter immediately.
- ø Assemble an emergency supply kit for use at home or in your vehicle. Make sure to include a 3-day supply of non-perishable food and bottled water.
- ø If driving, leave your vehicle immediately to seek shelter in a safe structure. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle and do not stop under an overpass or bridge.
- ø If there is no shelter available, take cover in a low-lying flat area.

Read Governor Cooper's proclamation and get more information on tornadoes and overall emergency preparedness online at www.ReadyNC.org.

Think Before Burning Yard Debris During Spring Wildfire Season

In North Carolina, March through May is historically recognized as spring wildfire season, a period when conditions are more favorable for wildfire. As residents begin working in their yards, the N.C. Forest Service urges them to think before burning yard debris.

"Every year, almost 40 percent of wildfires in North Carolina are the result of careless debris burning," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "To protect ourselves and our forestland from wildfire, we have to be responsible and vigilant. Check the weather. Make sure you're prepared to burn before you do. Never leave a debris fire unattended, and always have a water source and phone nearby in case you need them."

There are many factors to consider before burning yard debris. The N.C. Forest Service encourages residents to contact their local county forest ranger for technical advice and options to help ensure the safety of people, property and the forest. To find contact information for your local NCFS county ranger, visit www.ncforestservation.gov/contacts.

The N.C. Forest Service offers the following tips to protect property and prevent wildfires:

- Consider alternatives to burning. Some types of debris, such as leaves, grass and stubble, may be of more value if they are not burned, but used for compost or mulch instead.
- Check local burning laws. Some communities allow burning only during specified hours. Others forbid it entirely.
- Make sure you have a valid permit. You can obtain a burn permit at any open authorized permitting agent or online at www.ncforestservation.gov/burnpermit.
- Local fire officials can recommend a safe way to burn debris. Don't pile vegetation on the ground. Instead, place it in a cleared area and contain it in a screened receptacle away from overhead branches and wires. Keep your pile small, not tall.
- Stay informed about the weather and possible weather changes. Postpone outdoor burning during high winds or gusts, or periods of low relative humidity. Even if you have a valid permit, stop burning if strong winds develop.
- Be sure you are fully prepared before burning. To control the fire, you will need a hose, bucket, steel rake and a shovel for tossing dirt on the fire. Keep a phone nearby, too.
- Never use kerosene, gasoline, diesel fuel or other flammable liquids to speed up debris burning.

Stay with your fire until it is completely out.

To learn more about fire safety and preventing wildfires and property damage or loss, visit www.ncforestservation.gov. To learn more about actions you can take to prepare your home and property for wildfire, visit www.resistwildfire.org.

What Would be the Best Use of the Leonidas Lafayette Polk House?

Preserve Mecklenburg Needs to Hear from the People

Preserve Mecklenburg is under contract to buy the Leonidas Lafayette Polk House in May. But what will the site become? Should it be a house museum? Should it be a private residence? The illustration shows it as a "farm-to-table" restaurant. The response of the citizens of Anson County to the preservation of the L L Polk House has been encouraging.

L. L. Polk was so important in the history of agriculture. That would seem to be a good use. The restaurant could be the centerpiece of a farmers market. But what do you think? Whatever we do it must be sustainable. Send your ideas to danmorrill2@gmail.com or call 704-574-3861.



Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

Career Fair on March 23

Are you a person with a disability looking for a career opportunity or internship? This Virtual Career Fair is FREE for jobseekers with disabilities.

Date: Tuesday, March 23
Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: Virtual

As an Employment First State for individuals with disabilities, North Carolina State Government is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming workspace for individuals with disabilities. NC State Government will be represented at this virtual job fair to recruit applicants interested in public service careers for competitive opportunities at agencies and locations across NC.

Opportunities are available for every level of candidate, from experienced professionals to recent college graduates and college students with disabilities, to meet online with state agency recruiters from across North Carolina. Candidates are invited to interact with state agency employers via text chat sessions.

Register and get more information at osh.nc.gov/virtual-career-fair-individuals-disabilities.

Cast Selected for Ansonia Play

The Ansonia Theatre will present the play *Prelude to a Kiss in May*. After holding tryouts the cast has been selected. They are: Carson Traywick (Peter); Amanda Ross (Rita); Chip Long (Dr. B.); Cheryl Stewart (Mrs. B.); Terra Medlock (Aunt D./Leah); Mark Traywick (Uncle Fred); Joshua Peterson (Taylor); Robert Graves (Old Man); Glen Caulder (Minister); and Liz Stewart (Tom/Waiter).

Prelude to a Kiss will run May 14-16 and 21-23 at the Ansonia Theatre. Tickets will go on sale Friday, March 26. Information and tickets at ansoniatheatre.com or 704-694-4950.

AnsonEDP's First Virtual Trade Show

In 2020, businesses learned to adapt and use new technologies to get the job done. Nowhere was that more evident than in the proliferation of online meetings and conferences. On February 16-17, AnsonEDP teamed up with the Charlotte Regional Business Alliance and the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina to bring a virtual trade show to the region. Hosted on the virtual Pathable platform, the show drew more than 100 companies and attendees from across 17 North and South Carolina counties. Guest speakers included Chris Chung of EDPNC, noted economist Mark Vitner, and Rosemary Coates of The ReShoring Institute, but the real draw was the opportunity for these companies to find local suppliers and customers to strengthen their supply chains and further boost local economies.

While the primary purpose of the event was to facilitate connections between local manufacturers, AnsonEDP also had a "booth" at the show, which was visited 16 times by nine different people. Our Atlantic Gateway video was viewed four times and our "About Anson County" and "Local Incentives Explained" brochures were each downloaded five times.