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

2,388 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Monday, March 15 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 2,388 reported cases of COVID-19. 63 of those cases were active. At that point they had discharged 2,325 cases, 2,271 to baseline health and 54 deaths.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) reported statewide as of Monday, March 15 there were 1,2337 new cases of COVID-19, with 11,709 deaths and 976 hospitalized.

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

Recent history in Anson County: March 31, 2020: 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); March 8: 2,342 cases (54 deaths).

Please note that for more information regarding county/state statistics, refer to www.ncdhhs.gov.

Health Director Fred Thompson, PhD gave this update, "Effective immediately, the Health Department is opening COVID-19 vaccinations to Group 4, adults 18 and over who are at high risk for exposure and increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19. This includes adults who are overweight, who are smokers, are diabetic, etc. The complete list of qualifying medical conditions is on the registration form.

In addition to Group 4, we continue to vaccinate Group 1, healthcare workers, Group 2, the 65 and over, and Group 3, frontline essential workers.

I want to encourage everyone who is eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccination. The vaccine is both safe and effective and vaccinations are critical in being able to finally put the pandemic behind us.

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. Once we receive the registration form, we will contact the individual to schedule their vaccination.

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.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions you may have."

Birds of NC: their Distribution & Abundance

Visit the online "Birds of North Carolina" website at ncbirds.carolinabirdclub.org

This website aims to provide a compendium of all of the bird species recorded (i.e., accepted to either the Definitive List or the Provisional List) in North Carolina, with general information about their distribution in the state -- by regions or provinces, their relative abundance in each region, their periods of occurrence in the state, and information about finding each species in the state. County maps of occurrence are provided for each species; in addition, breeding season maps, showing abundance by county, for each nesting species are being developed, and wintering season maps will be developed later.

To see a species account, click on the first letter of the species' name, find the species in the resulting list, and then click "View"; or enter the species name in the "Search Common or Scientific Name" search box. You may also find the species you want by clicking on the dropdown (blue arrow) under either of the two Family entries, then navigating to the species of interest and clicking "View". Once you are at a species account, you can navigate to the previous species in the checklist sequence by clicking on the flying heron on the left, or to the next species in the checklist order by clicking on the flying heron on the right; or, you can click on the dropdown arrow to the right of the species name. Each account also has four interactive links, below the species name.

There are several tabs on the left side of the homepage. Currently, the most useful one is probably the interactive Carolina Bird Club link for "Definitive/Provisional List" which lists all of the species on the current NC state list. "County Listing" allows the user to determine all of the species recorded in a chosen county, or shows a county occurrence map for a chosen species.

Anson High School Athletic Ticket Sales Now Are Exclusively Online

As of March 15, Anson High School Athletics have changed to an all online ticket sales platform for sporting events. All ticket sales for sporting events will be purchased online, and there will be no cash tickets sold at the gate. Tickets will become available several days in advance.

Tickets will be made available to the athletes immediate family first and then to the general public.

The link to purchase tickets will be posted on social media or you can find it on the Anson High School webpage (www.ansonschools.org/AHS) under "Student Corner" and then "Athletics."



NC Pre-K children learn how to socialize, make their own decisions, and interact with others. These are all important skills to child development. To make the transition to Kindergarten easier, children learn eye contact, gain self-confidence, develop work efficiency, create a stronger attention span, and work on temper control," said Karen Gerald, Child Care Services Coordinator, Anson County Partnership for Children.

Not only are children who attended Pre-K more successful in school, they usually have higher grade point averages and are more likely to graduate high school and college.

NC Pre-K classes operate on a regular school calendar and are designed to address emotional and social development, physical health, language development, and cognitive functioning. Through the incorporation of indoor and outdoor learning environments, students participate in active learning experiences to foster a lifetime love of learning.

A high priority is placed on serving children who meet the following criteria: child's family is at or below 75% of the state median income level, a disability has been identified, limited English proficiency, developmental differences, chronic health conditions, or a parent who is active military service personnel.

There are currently four centers operating NC Pre-K classes in Anson County. These classrooms are located at Anson Children's Center, Central Center for Children and Families, Morven Elementary School, and Open Doors Center for Children.

Parents or guardians interested in learning more about the NC Pre-K program should contact Karen Gerald at 704-694-4036 (Ext. 105) or karen.gerald@ansonchildren.org. Applications are available in the Partnership's Early Childhood Resource Center, located at 117 South Greene Street in uptown Wadesboro, or online at www.ansonchildren.org.

Anson Schools to Receive \$4.2 Million for COVID Relief

Anson County schools are set to receive an estimated \$4.2 million from the latest COVID relief funds appropriated by the General Assembly.

The General Assembly allocated \$1.6 billion in COVID-19 education relief funds earlier this year, and of that, Anson County Schools will benefit from an estimated \$4.2 million.

These funds can be used to help with reopening efforts and responding to COVID-19. They can also be used for mental health services, as discretionary funds to address the individual needs of schools, learning loss, and activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of the school's services.

Please Donate Your Used Eyeglasses

According to the World Health Organization, 163 million people have uncorrected refractive errors (near-sightedness, far-sightedness or astigmatism). Most of these vision impairments are quickly diagnosed and easy to treat with corrective lenses

Still, millions of people in developing nations are pushed deeper into poverty simply because they don't have glasses. They cannot learn because reading is difficult. They can't work to the best of their abilities because they can't see clearly. For children, clear vision means a better education, healthier development and a better quality of life. For adults, clear vision means greater employment opportunities and economical strength. For seniors, clear vision means less dependence on others.

North Carolina Lions Clubs collect over 170,000 pairs of glasses each year to address the need for glasses, making eyeglass recycling one of our most popular activities. The items needed are complete reusable glasses both plastic and metal frames, gold frames in any condition, antique glasses, broken glasses and any kind of sunglasses. They can't use loose lenses and cases.

If you have glasses you would like to donate, please drop them off at the Anson Family Optometric at 1134 Holly Street and Covington Eye Clinic/Carolina Eye Associates at 310 North Greene Street, both in Wadesboro.

And, thank you for your continues support of the Wadesboro Lions Club by purchasing their brooms at Lacy's, Martin Furniture and Northcutt's Affordables in Marshville.

For further information about the club please contact Lion Jim Chandler at 910-571-1448.

People with High-Risk Medical Condition in Group 4 will be Eligible for COVID-19 Vaccine Beginning March 17

People who have a medical condition that puts them at higher risk or who live in certain congregate settings eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine on March 17; Additional members of Group 4 eligible April 7

Governor Roy Cooper and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. announced beginning on March 17, people in Group 4 who have a medical condition that puts them at higher risk of serious illness and people who live in certain congregate settings will be eligible for vaccination. The rest of Group 4, which includes other essential workers will become eligible April 7. "This move to Group 4 is good news," said Governor Cooper. "I know there are many efforts across the state getting vaccines to people as quickly and fairly as possible and I want our providers to know that their work is making all the difference."

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) is in constant contact with providers across the state and surveys both their vaccine capacity and supply. The state was able to update its timeline today based on provider feedback and expected supply. As with previous eligibility changes, some vaccine providers may not be ready to open to Group 4 on March 17 if they are still experiencing high demand for vaccines in Groups 1 through 3.

"We are very fortunate to now have three tested, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines that keep people out of the hospital and prevent death from this virus," said Secretary Cohen. "With improving supplies, North Carolina can get more people vaccinated sooner and meet our goals to provide equitable access to vaccinations in every community in the state."

More than 1.1 million North Carolinians have been fully vaccinated as the state works with local health departments and providers to distribute this vaccine quickly and equitably. While supply is still limited, the increased federal allocation of doses is helping providers administer vaccines to more people.

North Carolina has continued to emphasize equity in the vaccine distribution process. In the last four weeks, more than 20 percent of the state's first doses have been administered to Black North Carolinians. On Sunday, Bloomberg News recognized North Carolina as the leader in the nation for reporting demographic data on who has been vaccinated down to the county level.

On Wednesday, Governor Cooper announced the opening of a federally supported community vaccination center opened in Greensboro. This site — one of just 18 sites nationally — will help the state continue its effort to reach more marginalized and underserved communities. The federal government will provide the center's vaccine supply, which is in addition to North Carolina's weekly allotment from the Centers for Disease Control. The site will operate seven days a week with the capacity to provide up to 3,000 vaccinations per day, with options for drive-thru service in the parking lot and walk-in service.

Detailed information about each vaccine group is online at YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov (English) or vacunate.nc.gov (Spanish). North Carolinians can find vaccine providers in their community through the NCDHHS online tool, Find a Vaccine Location.

The COVID-19 vaccine help center is available to answer vaccine questions at 888-675-4567.

Apply For NC Pre-Kindergarten Today

The Anson County Partnership for Children is accepting applications for NC Pre-K, a Kindergarten readiness initiative that is proven to help four-year-olds gain basic skills needed for success in elementary school. Children who are four years of age before August 31, 2021, are eligible to apply for this high-quality program, which is free to qualifying families.

"Pre-K is a place where children learn skills that are vital to child development.

NC Pre-K children learn how to socialize, make their own decisions, and interact with others. These are all important skills to child development. To make the transition to Kindergarten easier, children learn eye contact, gain self-confidence, develop work efficiency, create a stronger attention span, and work on temper control," said Karen Gerald, Child Care Services Coordinator, Anson County Partnership for Children.

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Arbor Day and the Importance of Planting Trees

As North Carolina's urban tree canopy declines, the need to continue to plant trees becomes even more important as the state joins in the recognition of Arbor Day.

Established in 1872 as a tree-planting holiday, more than a million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day. Today, all 50 states, including North Carolina, and numerous countries around the globe recognize Arbor Day and its celebration of the planting, upkeep and preservation of trees.

Each year, North Carolina is losing around 4,510 acres of urban canopy cover. Urban tree canopy cover in North Carolina is an estimated 54 percent of total land mass. The national average is about 39 percent. While North Carolina ranks in the top 10 states in the country for urban canopy cover, the estimated percentage of urban land in North Carolina grew from 9.5 percent in 2010 to 11.5 percent in 2020.

"Trees and forests are an important part of the solution to many challenges we face in North Carolina," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "We are fortunate to have state forestry programs that promote and protect forest resources by supporting communities and landowners with site preparation, tree-planting and forest improvement. Ensuring the sustainable management of North Carolina's forests is critical for our economy and future generations. Planting trees is one way we can all do our part on Arbor Day and every day."

Why is it important to plant trees on Arbor Day in North Carolina? Planting trees and responsible urban forest management in NC are critical for keeping the state on the path to sustainable forest resources and realizing the benefits trees and forests provide.

Learn more about urban and community forestry programs and services available through the N.C. Forest Service at ncforests.service.gov/Urban/Urban_Forestry.htm.

- Other sites with information are: www.ncforestry.org.
- N.C. Urban Forest Council at www.ncufc.org
- NCSU Extension Forestry at forestry.ces.ncsu.edu
- North Carolina Project Learning Tree at forestry.ces.ncsu.edu/ncplt.