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

Anson County's February Unemployment Rate Was 5.2%

Anson County's unemployment rate for February was 5.2%, basically unchanged from January's 5.3% rate. Statewide the unemployment rate was 4.6% in February. Anson's total labor force in February was 10,520. Of that number 9,975 were employed and 545 were unemployed. In January the total labor force was 10,375 with 9,830 employed and 545 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in 74 of North Carolina's counties in February, increased in 10, and remained unchanged in 16. Hyde County had the highest unemployment rate at 14.9 percent, while Buncombe County had the lowest at 3.5 percent.

Eleven of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases while four remained unchanged. Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount at 6.8 percent had the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 3.7 percent. The February not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 4.6 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased in 97 counties, increased in two, and remained unchanged in one. All 15 metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in February by 44,983 to 4,750,064, while those unemployed decreased 2,927 to 227,582. Since February 2017, the number of workers employed statewide increased 90,915, while those unemployed decreased 17,547.



Peachland-Polkton Elementary School's Jump Rope for Heart Raises Over \$11,000!

Jump Rope for Heart isn't anything new to Peachland-Polkton Elementary School, however the amount that was raised this year is. For the past six years PPES has raised at least \$10,000 every year for the American Heart Association. This year was the biggest year yet by raising \$11,550. That makes a grand total of \$71,550 raised in the past seven years.

Peachland-Polkton Physical Education department, led by Shelly Vetter and Hannah Parker, would like to thank the community and students for their hard work to make this happen. The money that is raised helps fund cardiovascular research and education that will help save lives across the nation.

Correctional Officer Assaulted at Lanesboro Correctional Institution

On the morning of Thursday, April 12 at approximately 8:30 a.m. an inmate assaulted another inmate at Lanesboro Correctional Institution in Polkton. Correctional officers responded to the situation, and one of the inmates turned and assaulted one of the officers.

The correctional officer and both inmates were taken to outside medical facilities with non-life-threatening injuries. Lanesboro's close custody units were put on lockdown.

Director of Prisons Kenneth Lassiter said, "Local law enforcement responded to the incident and we appreciate all their support. We will seek assault charges on the inmate who initiated the incident."

Wadesboro 3 Precinct Voting Site Changed

The Anson County Board of Elections by way of Resolution on Tuesday March 14, and by approval of the North Carolina State Board of Elections on Wednesday March 22 has announced the permanent relocation of the Wadesboro 3 Voting Precinct. The voting site had been located at the Wadesboro Primary School on Highway 52 South. It has been relocated to the Anson County AA Building, which is located at 2177 Country Club Road in Wadesboro, across from the Emergency Services Center.

This permanent change will be in effect for the upcoming May 8 Primary Election.

All voters who vote in the Wadesboro 3 Precinct should already have received notification of this change in the mail. For more information contact the Anson County Board of Elections. They are located at 402 Morven Road in Wadesboro. The telephone number is 704-994-3223.

Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge Youth Fishing Rodeo is Saturday

The Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge will hold their annual Youth Fishing Rodeo this Saturday, April 21 on Sullivan Pond at the Refuge. The event will be held from 8 a.m. until 12 noon. There will be prizes for the biggest fish, smallest fish, and most fish caught. Kids 12 and under may enter the rodeo, but all ages are invited to participate. Fishing rods, tackle and bait will be available if you do not have your own, so come on out for this great outdoor event and help celebrate an eventful national pastime.

A hot dog lunch will be provided by the Friends of the Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge following the fishing activities at 11 a.m. Other goodies will also be provided!

The Pee Dee NWR is located 3 miles south of Ansonville, at 5770 Highway 52 North. Call 704-694-4424 for more information.

Meetings Called for Town of Wadesboro

A special meeting of the Town of Wadesboro was held on Monday, April 16, and two more meetings have been set for the following dates:

- Wednesday, April 18 at 4 p.m.
- Monday, April 23 at 4 p.m.

The meetings were called to discuss the personnel and any other business to come before the council. On personnel, the town released this NC General Statute information: N.C. General Statutes 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee.

Another special meeting has been called for Monday, April 30 at 5 p.m. for the following:

- Public hearing for public input about the Town of Wadesboro submitting application for USDA financial assistance to replace and relocate the existing pump station on Burns Street and relocate forcemain, replace the existing Cuffing Hoist pump station, and to replace approximately 7,000 linear feet of water main in uptown Wadesboro.
- Travis Preslar from NC Department of Transportation will discuss the Highway 74 median project with council.
- Any other business to come before the council.

The meetings will be held in the Town of Wadesboro Town Hall Conference Room.

Fire Department Ribbon Cutting

Anson citizens are invited to come to the new Wadesboro Fire Department in uptown Wadesboro this Thursday, April 19 at 4 p.m. for a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

Fire Chief Marc Sessions and his team of firefighters have worked hard on this project, with support from the Town of Wadesboro. The result is a state of the art facility that will enhance the mission of the fire department.

Lanesboro Correctional Converting to All Female Facility

On Monday, April 9 the NC Division of Prisons announced mission changes at several facilities to address safety, security and operational needs. Lanesboro Correctional Institution in Polkton was one of the affected facilities.

The changes, which could take up to a year to complete, include converting Lanesboro Correctional Institution into a facility for female inmates and renaming it Anson Correctional Institution. The facility currently houses male inmates classified for close custody, the highest level of supervision within state prisons. The Lanesboro minimum unit will continue to house minimum custody male inmates at the former Brown Creek unit, which is adjacent to the Lanesboro property.

Two female facilities, Southern Correctional Institution in Troy (Montgomery County) and Eastern Correctional Institution in Maury (Greene County), will become facilities for close custody male inmates.

"We are converting the facilities to enhance safety and security and improve management of close custody male inmates who require greater supervision by moving them into smaller facilities and smaller housing units," Director of Prisons Kenneth Lassiter said. "We will continue to review security procedures and work with existing resources to ensure that these facilities are safe for both the inmates and state employees who work there."

Converting the facilities will enhance management of the close custody male population by moving them into smaller facilities and smaller housing units. The changes will also reduce the inmate population at N.C. Correctional Institution for Women, which consistently operates above its capacity causing safety issues and stresses on the facility's infrastructure.

Some staff will remain at their current facilities while others may move to a new facility if they want to continue to work in either a male or female facility. Department leaders will accommodate as many employee requests to continue to work in a facility of their choice as possible. The impacted employees will receive gender-specific training if they will be working with inmates of a different gender than before.

"Our priority is making prisons safer and more secure and we believe these changes will help accomplish that," said Judge Reuben Young, Interim Chief Deputy Secretary of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice. "We also believe that the changes will help us be more successful at recruiting and retaining staff for custody, program, medical and mental health work at Lanesboro. We intend to manage the conversion in a manner that will allow us to retain every employee who wishes to remain employed without any salary reductions."

The majority of female inmates to be housed at Lanesboro will be in medium custody. The prison's layout will give management flexibility to house other custody levels in the future and provide for potential growth of the female population, including the possibility of adding a diagnostic (intake) center in the future.

While maintenance and other infrastructure improvements are being made at Lanesboro to prepare it to house female inmates, Neuse Correctional Institution in Wayne County will be converted from a male facility to temporarily house females, and the Department will temporarily re-open the former North Piedmont Correctional Center in Davidson County as a female facility.

Since October the Department of Public Safety has conducted a comprehensive review of security measures in state corrections facilities and taken steps to increase the safety of prison employees and inmates statewide.

Amateur Night at the Ansonia Sat.

Calling all local talent in the Anson County area! The Shaundasia T. Smith Foundation will be sponsoring an Amateur Night at the Ansonia Theatre this Saturday, April 21, 7 to 9 p.m. The event is open to all comedy acts, singers and dancers. Whatever your talent, you are invited to showcase it at this upcoming event. Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third places during the event. First Prize in the Adult Category pays \$150! Spaces are limited, so register asap!

All proceeds benefit the nonprofit Shaundasia T. Smith Foundation. The foundation awards an annual scholarship, athletic award and aids in other things within Anson County.

For more information and to register contact one of the following: Cassandra Reid 704-695-7097; Christine Hall 704-690-2596; or Amy Turner 704-695-6408.

By the Numbers. Lanesboro's female facility capacity will be 1,000 inmates.

The capacity for the male minimum security unit (which has the state's minimum security designation) will remain at 560 inmates.

Lanesboro has a total capacity of 1,850 inmates in close, medium and minimum custody designations. The staff size is 512. It was opened in 2004 with 1,000 close custody cells. A 504 bed medium custody building was added a few years later. In September 2016 neighboring Brown Creek Correctional Institution was merged with Lanesboro, becoming its 350 bed minimum custody unit. Lanesboro has 128 segregation cells and eight health care beds.

Correction Enterprises operates two industries at Lanesboro. The metal products plant employs minimum custody inmates producing a variety of stainless steel kitchen equipment and other metal goods. Close and medium custody inmates staff the inmate packaging operation.

- As of March 28, 2018, there were approximately 3,000 female offenders housed in state prisons and 34,300 male offenders.
- The current female capacity for the two facilities being converted to male is: 448 at Southern Correctional Institution and 476 at Eastern Correctional Institution.
- After conversion, Southern Correctional Institution close custody capacity will be 448 inmates, plus 36 restrictive housing beds. A separate housing area that currently houses 220 minimum custody male inmates will remain, bringing the total number of beds to 704.
- Eastern Correctional Institution will be close custody, with a capacity of 476 male inmates.

Same Kind of Different as Me is Free Movie

The Hampton B. Allen Library announces the free movie for Monday, April 23 is *Same Kind of Different as Me*. It runs at 10 a.m. in the Little Theatre. The movie is based on the inspiring true story of international art dealer Ron Hall (Greg Kinnear) who befriends a homeless man (Djimon Hounsou) in hopes of saving his struggling marriage to Debbie (Renée Zellweger), a woman whose dreams will lead all three of them on the most remarkable journey of their lives. Jon Voight plays Hall's father. The movie is based on the New York Times best-seller. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy this incredible movie!