

THE EXPRESS

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

Howard E. McLean Named Superintendent of Anson County Schools

In a release from the Anson County School Board: The Anson County School Board is pleased to announce the next Superintendent of Anson County Schools, Howard E. McLean. Mr. McLean has worked in Anson County Schools for 33 years and served as a teacher, coach, assistant principal, principal at Morven Elementary School and Anson Middle School, associate superintendent, and now superintendent.



Mr. McLean earned his BA degree from Chowan Jr. College, his Master of Education Degree from Winthrop University,

and his Education Specialist in Educational Administration and Supervision Degree from East Carolina University.

Among his many recognitions and awards include Anson County Wachovia Principal of the Year 2002 and 2007, Certificate of Achievement; Emerging Trends Network for NC School Districts, Anson County Chamber of Commerce Vice Chairperson (2018 - 2019), Anson County Chamber of Commerce Chairperson (2020 - Present), and Anson County Chamber of Commerce Executive Board (2018 - Present). Along with these prestigious recognitions, Mr. McLean has continued to be active in many civic organizations. Those include Wadesboro Rotary Member and Club Board of Directors (2019 - Present), North Carolina Association of Educators, North Carolina Association of School Administrators, Anson County Chamber of Commerce, Sandhills Regional Consortium Curriculum Council, and North Carolina Principal's Association.

The Masonboro Group out of Wilmington, NC was chosen by the Anson County Board of Education to conduct a thorough superintendent's search for our county. The Masonboro Group identified seventeen potential candidates from across North Carolina and neighboring states and provided our Board with six high quality candidates for interview and consideration. After the interviews, it was apparent that the best candidate for Anson County Schools Superintendent was our own Howard E. McLean.

School Board member George Truman said, "On behalf of the Anson County Board of Education, I want to announce the next Superintendent of Anson County Schools - Howard E. McLean. The Board is proud of his work in our system and look forward to his continuation of quality leadership for our children."

Wadesboro Police Officer Shot After Vehicle Pursuit on Tuesday, May 26

Suspect also shot. Both treated at area hospitals.

Responding to a report of gunfire at about 11 p.m. on Tuesday night, May 26, Wadesboro Police officers located the suspect vehicle with four occupants and attempted to pull it over. The driver did not stop, leading the officers on a chase that ended on Myrtlewood Drive in Wadesboro. At that point gunfire was exchanged, and a police officer was shot. One of the four suspects was also shot. The officer was airlifted to a Charlotte hospital, and is expected to recover. No information was available on the condition of the suspect who was shot. The other three suspects escaped, and were still at large as of press time.

It was reported that a second police officer was shot, with his equipment damaged but no injury.

The State Bureau of Investigation is involved in the ongoing investigation.

This is a release issued on Wednesday, May 27 by the Town of Wadesboro: As many in the community are already aware, officers from the Wadesboro Police Department were involved in an unfortunate incident late last night that resulted in an exchange of gunfire. One of our officers was injured, as well as one of the suspects that our officers were attempting to speak with.

At the time of this release, both of them are being cared for in an area hospital, but out of respect for their families and the ongoing investigation their names will not be released at this time.

This is a tragedy for all involved, so the Town of Wadesboro and the Wadesboro Police Department are actively cooperating with the investigation to determine the cause of this incident. We understand and appreciate the public's concern whenever an officer is faced with the difficult decision to defend himself/herself and others against someone who might have a weapon. Our officers are dedicated to working hard every day to protect the public and stop crime, and there are times when an officer is faced with no other option than to use deadly force.

We understand that the public wants to know more, which is why we worked all night to gather facts and have reached out for assistance from the State Bureau of Investigation, who will be leading the investigation from this point forward. The most professional response is to take the time to get this right, and we will provide more information as soon as it's available and confirmed. Please continue to be in prayer for all those involved and for our community to heal from this tragic incident.

Thank you, David Edwards, Town Manager & Thedis Spencer, Chief of Police

Hampton B. Allen Library is Now Open with Restrictions

The Hampton B. Allen Library is now open to the public with some restrictions. The hours are: Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The library is closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

- They have a limit of 8 patrons allowed in the library at any given time.
- Each patron will have a limit of 1 hour visit to allow other patrons equal time.
- Patrons must wear a face mask.

The library will continue to provide curbside service. Call 704-694-5177 for assistance.



Pictured above, from left, are Dave Anderson (HealthQuest Board Member), Margaret Meachem and Brent Lammers (Executive Director).

Guidelines can apply to become clients of HealthQuest. For more information please visit website: www.healthquestpharmacy.org or call 704-226-2050.

Pryor Gibson is New Head of Division of Employment Security

Anson County native Gibson takes over from Lockhart Taylor, another Anson native

On Wednesday, May 27 North Carolina Secretary of Commerce Tony Copeland announced that Pryor Gibson will serve as the Assistant Secretary for the Division of Employment Security (DES). He assumes the role immediately, and will be responsible for the Division's operations, communication and accountability.

"Pryor Gibson is a forceful presence to lead DES during this unprecedented economic stress," said Secretary Copeland.

"It is always an honor to serve the people of North Carolina, and I am ready to take on the challenges at DES helping people get back on their feet and back in the economy" said Gibson.

Prior to this appointment, Gibson served as Director of Hometown Strong, Governor Roy Cooper's initiative to stimulate economies and help businesses thrive in North Carolina's rural communities by focusing on infrastructure improvement, broadband access, and workforce training. He previously served as Director of Business Services at the Division of Workforce Solutions at N.C. Commerce.

Lockhart Taylor, a Wadesboro native whose father and grandfather were North Carolina Lieutenant Governors, will assume a different role at the Department of Commerce with separate duties and responsibilities.

Pryor Gibson is a former member of the North Carolina General Assembly representing Anson, Montgomery, Stanly and Union counties. Gibson's business experience includes a decade at TimeWarner Cable Construction, Executive Vice President of the North Carolina Forestry Association, and as Senior Adviser for Governor Bev Perdue. Gibson is an Anson County native.

Completing the Census is Safe, Easy and Important!

Completing the survey is quick and easy to do. You can complete your Census questionnaire online, by phone or on paper. By using your phone, tablet or computer, or simply grabbing a pencil or pen, you can complete the questionnaire, spending less than 10 minutes on what can impact your community in the next 10 years.

The process is safe, easy and important and you can respond in one of three ways:

- 1) Online by visiting my2020census.gov.
- 2) By phone by calling 1-800-923-8282. For information on language support, click here for a listing of telephone numbers.
- 3) Via mail

Help Make North Carolina Count! View and download resource materials by visiting sites.google.com/view/2020-census-resources/outreach-toolkit.

Peaceful Protest Held in Wadesboro on Sunday

A large group of citizens gathered on Sunday, May 31 at the site of the former Anson Community Hospital for a protest march. The protest was spurred on by the death of George Floyd, an unarmed African American killed on May 25. Like protests nationwide, this protest was about more than that one tragic event. The protestors carried signs about Black Lives Matter and signs urging equal justice for everyone.

Wadesboro Police Chief Thedis Spencer spoke to the group, and Pastor Steve Adams of Harvest Ministries Outreach Center in Wadesboro led them in prayer.

The marchers followed a path through the streets of uptown Wadesboro, past the Police Department and Wadesboro Elementary School, before concluding the march where they began. The event was peaceful.

"Everyone at the march conducted themselves in an honorable manner," said Police Chief Spencer. "As Chief of Police I wanted the protestors to know we are there to protect them. We are about justice. We work so hard to gain the community trust and respect."

Pastor Steve Adams said, "To see two young Ansonians plan, orchestrate, and bring a large gathering of citizens together to stand peacefully and in unity for justice and equal treatment for all people was extraordinary to witness. To have the support of our sheriff, our police chief and law enforcement officers shows that together we are stronger, and together we can bring positive awareness and change to our community. With each other - we can do great things. Love always wins. John 13:34 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

Even though the protestors peacefully gathered and marched, Chief Spencer said there almost was a problem caused by several individuals who showed up when the march was over.

"At the end of the march and protest we had about 10 individuals come up to the courthouse and attempt to cause some issues. But, they left without incident," Spencer said.

More pictures on page 2.



Margaret Meachem Earns Friend of HealthQuest Award

Ms. Margaret Meachem was awarded the 2020 Friend of HealthQuest Award on Tuesday, May 12. This award is presented annually by HealthQuest to the individual or organization that has been a valuable advocate and supporter to the nonprofit organization.

Brent Lammers, Executive Director of HealthQuest, stated, "Ms. Meachem has been a truly dedicated volunteer for over 14 years. She volunteers her time to help dispense the free prescription medications at our Wadesboro pharmacy location inside Atrium Health Anson hospital. She is one of our most dedicated volunteers who helps keep our organization running so well. Ms. Meachem has also been a prior member of our Board of Directors. On behalf of all the team at HealthQuest, thank you Ms. Meachem for your dedication and support."

HealthQuest is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides free prescription medication to those who cannot afford their medications. It has locations in Monroe and Wadesboro, and serves residents in Union, Anson, Stanly, Chesterfield and Lancaster counties. Citizens who have no prescription insurance and are below 200% of the Federal Poverty

Anson County Had 65 Reported Cases of COVID-19 as of Monday, June 1

As of Monday, June 1 the Anson County Health Department reported that Anson County had 65 reported cases of COVID-19, with 10 of those cases active. At this point they have discharged 55 cases, 54 to baseline health and one death.

Anson Schools Meal Distribution Update

Anson County Schools will continue serving meals Monday through Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Due to changes in their federal plan, they will only serve two meals at the same time which will consist of lunch on the pick-up day and breakfast for the next day. They are currently not allowed to serve meals for extended days. This will be effective through June 30.

Meals will not be served the week of July 4.

Additional updates will be provided as decisions are made to ensure that they are serving meals within the approved federal and state governance.

Fortunately, families are receiving meals delivered to homes, and funds for meals are being provided through other state and federal resources.

Severe Weather Safety in Mobile Homes or RVs

If a severe weather event is expected in your area, and you live in a mobile home or recreation vehicle, take precautions.

- Stay informed about current conditions.
- Listen to local officials and evacuation orders.
- Leave mobile homes, RVs and other non-permanent structures when evacuation orders are issued.
- When possible, shelter in permanent structures.
- Ready.gov/severe-weather and ReadyNC.org provide helpful information on how to plan.

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