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

## 461 Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Friday, September 4 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 461 reported cases of COVID-19. 30 of those cases were active. At that point they had discharged 431 cases, 427 to baseline health and four deaths.

**Recent history:** March 31 - 1 case; April 28 - 23 cases; May 26 - 62 cases; June 22 - 107 cases; July 27 - 285 cases; August 3 - 306 cases; August 9 - 328 cases; August 19 - 376 cases, August 26 - 408 cases.

## Five Steps to Vote by Mail in North Carolina in the 2020 General Election

No special circumstance or reason is needed to vote by mail in North Carolina. All registered voters in North Carolina may request an absentee ballot for the November 2020 general election. To vote by mail in North Carolina in 2020, follow the 5 steps below.

**1. Request your ballot.** There are two ways to request your ballot:

- Complete and sign a North Carolina Absentee Ballot Request Form. Available at [www.ncsbe.gov](http://www.ncsbe.gov). Instructions are included with the form.

*Note: Only the voter, the voter's near relative or legal guardian, or a member of a bipartisan assistance team may request a ballot for that voter.* OR

- Online through the Absentee Ballot Request Portal. [votebymail.ncsbe](http://votebymail.ncsbe)

**2. Submit your request.** If you are not using the online portal, submit your North Carolina Absentee Ballot Request Form by email, fax, mail or in person to your county board of elections. The Anson County Board of Elections is located at 402 Morven Road in Wadesboro.

The deadline to submit a request for the November 3, 2020 general election is 5 p.m. Tuesday, October 27.

**The State Board of Elections strongly encourages voters to request a ballot as soon as possible to avoid problems due to postal delays and to allow for time to correct any issues with your request.**

**3. Complete your ballot.** Your board of elections will mail your ballot to you, beginning September 4. Complete your absentee ballot in the presence of one witness and insert the ballot into the return envelope.

A witness should not observe so closely that they are able to see what votes the voter marked. What is required is that the witness sees the that the voter is voting the ballot.

**4. Complete and sign the absentee ballot return envelope.** Sign the outside of the ballot return envelope.

Have your witness complete and sign the witness certification. If you receive assistance marking or mailing the ballot, the assistant must fill out the voter assistant certification.

**5. Return your ballot to your county board of elections.** Only the voter or the voter's near relative or legal guardian may possess the absentee ballot to return it to the board of elections.

In 2020, there are a few ways to return your absentee ballot:

- By mail to your county board of elections, postmarked on or before Election Day, and received by 5 p.m. November 6. Address: Anson County Board of Elections, 402 Morven Road, Wadesboro NC 28170.
- By commercial courier service (DHL, FedEx or UPS)
- Dropped off in person at your county board of elections office by 5 p.m. Election Day (November 3).
- Dropped off in person at any early voting site in your county during voting hours

Find more information: Read through the list of 2020 vote-by-mail FAQs, or see the detailed instructions for voting by mail - all at [www.ncsbe.gov](http://www.ncsbe.gov). You can also call the Anson County Board of Elections at 704-994-3223.

**NOTE:** In last week's Express there was an article that listed all the candidates on Anson County ballots. Greg Eudy, who is running for Register of Deeds, was incorrectly listed as running as a Republican. Greg Eudy is running as Unaffiliated.

## Anson County's Unemployment Rate Increased to 10% in July

Anson County's unemployment rate for July was 10%. That was up from June's 7.9% rate. May's rate was 10.1% and April's rate was 8.2%. In March the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%. Statewide the unemployment rate was 8.9% in July, up from June's 7.9% rate

In July 2019 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.8%, and statewide the rate was 4.4%.

Anson's total labor force in July was 10,565. Of that number 9,509 were employed and 1,056 were unemployed. In June the total labor force was 10,252, with 9,446 employed and 806 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) increased in 99 of North Carolina's counties in July and remained unchanged in one. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 14.1 percent, while Camden had the lowest at 6.1 percent.

All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced increases. Among the metro areas, Fayetteville had the highest rate at 11.6 percent and New Bern had the lowest at 7.5 percent. The July not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 8.9 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in all 100 counties. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in July by 83,070 to 4,524,153, while those unemployed increased by 69,515 to 441,279. Since July 2019, the number of workers employed statewide decreased 382,189, while those unemployed increased 221,740.

## Picnic at Grace Senior Center

• **Drive-Thru Picnic** Tuesday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon - Bagged Lunch which includes hot-dog with all the fixings, chips, cookie and drink.



**Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Talia Marshall, Battalion Commander**



**Cadet Major Shavonda Garris, Battalion Executive Officer**

## New JROTC Battalion Top 3 Selected

The JROTC Bearcat Battalion is proud to announce the School Year (SY) 2020-21 Top 3 battalion leaders, carefully selected from stringent talent management criterion! The competition was fierce, as there were several well-qualified candidates vying for the positions of: battalion command sergeant major, battalion executive officer, and battalion commander. The arduous selection process consisted of a whole-person survey based : academics performance, physical fitness, extracurricular school activities, and community service and involvement. Additionally, the nominees were interviewed by the JROTC cadre for suitability, and finally, the nominees were vetted through the current cadet battalion chain of command for selection recommendations. Collectively, the selectees have twelve years of JROTC experience, all having served in key leadership positions. The SY 2020-21 selectees are:

- **Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Talia Marshall, Battalion Commander.** C/LTC Marshall, a senior and fourth year cadet has held key leadership positions in the battalion including: class leader, squad leader, and company First Sergeant. She is a well-rounded leader, participating in variety of extracurricular activities including: varsity cheerleading, varsity indoor/outdoor track and field, and the National Honor Society. Last year, she was selected to attend the North Carolina Governor's School for intellectually gifted high school students. In addition to balancing a demanding high school curriculum and part-time job, she is currently participating in dual enrollment at South Piedmont Community College and is on pace to graduate with an Associate's Degree upon high school graduation.

- **Cadet Major Shavonda Garris, Battalion Executive Officer.** C/MAJ Shavonda Garris is a senior and fourth year cadet, serving key leadership positions including: squad leader, platoon sergeant, platoon leader, and company commander. She is a highly motivated leader, participating in variety of extracurricular activities including: varsity cheerleading, varsity dance team, varsity track and field, and the National Honor Society. Additionally, she is the currently reigning queen of the Debutante Cotillion of Alpha Eta Chapter of Alpha Pi Chi National Sorority, Inc. While managing a hectic schedule, she has also earned credits through South Piedmont Community College.

- **Cadet Sergeant Major Mahogany Sanderson, Battalion Command Sergeant Major.**

C/CSM Sanderson a senior and fourth year cadet has served as squad leader, platoon sergeant, and company first sergeant. She is a talented leader, participating in a multitude of extracurricular activities including varsity cheerleading, varsity dance team, and varsity track.

Congratulations to these leaders who have the awesome privilege of leading this fine organization and carrying on the Bearcat Battalion legacy of service to the school and community!

## Deadline Approaching for Local Teachers to Apply for Bright Ideas Grants from Pee Dee Electric

**Final Deadline for Applications is September 18, 2020**

Time is running out for local K-12 teachers to apply for grants of up to \$2,000 from Pee Dee Electric through the Bright Ideas Education Grant Program. Educators with creative ideas for projects for their students must submit their application by September 18th. Interested teachers can find the application, along with grant-writing tips and program information, on the Bright Ideas website at [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Pee Dee Electric is being flexible with grant criteria and the types of projects awarded this year. Teachers are encouraged to apply for innovative, creative projects that will benefit students whether they are in the classroom or learning remotely. Teachers at qualifying schools in Anson, Richmond, Scotland, Stanly, and Montgomery counties can apply for grants individually or as a team.

Pee Dee Electric is one of 26 electric cooperatives in North Carolina offering Bright Ideas grants to local teachers. Since 1994, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded more than \$12.9 million in Bright Ideas funding for nearly 12,359 projects supporting teachers and benefiting more than 2.5 million students.

The Bright Ideas grant program is part of Pee Dee Electric ongoing commitment to community and education. To learn more about this and other community outreach efforts, visit [pdemc.com](http://pdemc.com) or [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).

Pee Dee Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative whose goal is to provide reliable, dependable electric service for its members while focusing on value, quality customer service, and enhancing life in the communities we serve. Pee Dee's service area consists of Anson, Montgomery, Moore, Richmond, Scotland, Stanly and Union counties.

For more information about Pee Dee Electric, please visit [www.pdemc.com](http://www.pdemc.com).

## Weekly Virtual Raising A Reader Program

*This is a release from the Anson County Partnership for Children:* Literacy program for NC Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten goes virtual in Anson County starting September 8th. Unfortunately, COVID-19 is changing the way we learn and share resources but we are resilient! Raising A Reader will be hosted virtually by the Anson County Partnership for Children via the Partnership's YouTube channel.

"Raising A Reader is essential to providing children the opportunity to increase healthy brain development, family bonding, literacy skills to create a positive attitude towards education," said Karen Gerald, Childcare Services Coordinator. "Studies have shown, when parents read to their children, the child's receptive language skills increases by 40%. In addition, to increased language skills, reading helps children develop longer attention spans." Gerald added.

Raising A Reader is a literacy program that increases book sharing in the home. Traditionally, each week children bring home a red bag filled with award-winning books to practice reading and parents are given tips about reading and brain development. However, for NC Pre-K and Kindergarteners enrolled in virtual learning there is a virtual option for Raising A Reader.

Parents and caregivers can visit the Anson County Partnership for Children YouTube channel to participate in weekly virtual Raising A Reading mini workshops. Raising A Reader learning packets will be available for pick-up at the free little libraries across the county, or the Anson County Partnership for Children starting September 8th. RAR learning packets will include books and supplies for the suggested activities. These packets are available on a first come, first served basis.

Videos will be posted on Tuesday of each week beginning September 8th. The reading schedule is as follows:

- Week 1-September 8th, *I Went Walking* by Sue Williams
- Week 2-September 15th, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr and John Archambault
- Week 3-September 22nd, *Does a Kangaroo have a Mother, too?* by Eric Carle
- Week 4-September 29th, *Eating the Alphabets* by Lois Elhert
- Week 5-October 6th, *It Looked Like Spilt Milk* by Charles Shaw
- Week 6-October 13th, *If You Give A Mouse A Cookie* by Laura Numeroff
- Week 7-October 20th, *Llama Llama Red Pajamas* by Anna Dewdney
- Week 8-October 27th, *Lola Reads to Leo* by Anna McQuinn
- Week 9-November 3rd, *I Love My Hair* by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley
- Week 10-November 10th, *Where The Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak

For more information, please contact the Anson County Partnership for Children at (704) 694-4036.

## September Webinars through Sandhills Center Family Support

**September 17:** Self-harm and Suicidal Ideation webinar will be held virtually via Zoom from 12 noon - 1:00 pm. Portia Purcell, LPC, LCAS will be the presenter. Contact Suzanne Maness at (910) 627-1769, toll free (877) 211-5995 or by email at [connectionsfsfp@gmail.com](mailto:connectionsfsfp@gmail.com) for more information and to register. Registration deadline is September 14.

**September 17:** Emotions: Identifying and Communicating webinar will be held from 1:00-2:00 pm via WebEx. Portia Purcell, MA, NCC, LPC, LCAS, CSI will be the presenter. Contact Shirlyn Morrison-Sims toll free at 1-877-776-6599, or by email at [search.family.support.program@gmail.com](mailto:search.family.support.program@gmail.com) to register. Upon registration, you will be sent the link to the webinar.

**September 23:** Multi-Systemic Therapy webinar will be held from 2:30-4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 23, 2020. Representatives from Amethyst Consulting and Treatment Solutions will lead discussion on WebEx with an overview of Multi-Systemic Therapy including MST for Substance Abuse and MST for Problem Sexual Behaviors. To register, contact Adrian Standish at [leeharnettfsfp@yahoo.com](mailto:leeharnettfsfp@yahoo.com) or 877-776-6702. Upon registration, you will be sent the link to the webinar.

**September 24:** Physical Activity, Nutrition, & Seasonally Appropriate Recipes webinar will be held virtually 1:00-2:30 p.m. Please contact Brenda Goss via email at this address: [randmontadufsp@gmail.com](mailto:randmontadufsp@gmail.com) or toll free at 877-211-7252 to register. Deadline to register is Tuesday, September 22 by 4:00 p.m.