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

## Anson County Residents, Our Animal Shelter Needs You!

**Volunteers can make a tremendous difference in the welfare and survival of the animals**  
**Information meeting set for February 4**

The Anson County Animal Shelter is facing a serious need for volunteers to help with the care of animals there. With your help the lost pets, abandoned animals, strays and other animals facing a difficult time can receive the food, comfort, attention, love and the care they need. The shelter is unable to provide these basic needs without your assistance.

**And, most importantly, a strong volunteer group at the shelter will help give the animals more time to be adopted before they are euthanized. This is a chance to lower Anson's high euthanization rate.**

In 2013 the Anson County Animal Shelter received 156 cats - 12 were adopted to new owners, 1 was returned to its owner, and 143 were euthanized. In 2013 the shelter received 507 dogs - 22 were adopted to new owners, 15 were returned to their owners, and 470 were euthanized.

In 2014 the Animal Shelter received 422 cats - 14 were adopted to new owners, 8 were returned to their owners, and 400 were euthanized. In 2014 the shelter received 678 dogs - 65 were adopted to new owners, 26 were returned to their owners, and 587 were euthanized. Also, in 2014 the shelter received 1 coyote and 1 skunk, both were euthanized.

In percentages, the euthanization rates at the Anson County Animal Shelter for 2014 were 94.8% for cats and 86.6% for dogs. These rates are too high, and with the community's help a lot

more animals can survive and end up in loving homes. A meeting has been set for Thursday, February 4 at 6 p.m. for those who are interested in volunteering. The meeting will take place at 605 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro, beside the Anson County Cooperative Extension office. For more information call 704-694-4832. You CAN make a difference!



These two dogs whose photo was featured in *The Express* were both adopted and now have a home. There are more dogs and cats at the shelter who would make a great new family member.



## Peachland-Polkton Elementary School Terrific Kids

Peachland-Polkton Elementary School held its Terrific Kids Celebration for the second 9 weeks on Tuesday, January 12. Pictured here are the students who were recognized for this honor.

PPES School Counselor Sadie Shaver said, "We are proud of these students for showing good character!" From left, front row: Elin Lockhart, Gracilee Bricker, Jasmine Richardson, Walker Stinson, Destinii Tanner, Bryson Buchanan, Rodrigo Venegas Lopez, Chance Brower, Emma Beam, Jaycee Biggers, Aubrey Jones, Lorelei Woodall, David Forbes and Coy Lear. Second row: Danielle Wiersum, Trinity Sellers, Madilyn Gordon, Erica Hammond, Eli Watts, Brooklyn Walker, Samantaha Tucker, Jeremiah Liles, Mia Martin, Faith Fincher, Tylee Lowery, Autumn Hayes, Jackie Vang and Ke'Azhia Osborne. Third row: Luke Hyatt, Bethany Smith, Alana Weger, Angleica Crawford, Destiny Slater, Gage Lookabill, Beverly Eddins, Demitri Hammond and Mandy Meachum. Back row: Shyheim Wall, Ann Tonnu, Yenzi Gomez, Caleb Laney, Case Carpenter, Aidan Carpenter, Adrianna White, Jakeia Boggan and Ny'Asia Taylor. Not Pictured: Ashley Murphy, Emma Horne, Wesley Hildreth and Hailey Sexton.

## Less Than a Week Left for North Carolinians to Enroll in Affordable Care Act - Deadline is January 31

**January 31 is the final deadline to enroll in coverage on the Health Insurance Marketplace and avoid paying a fine of \$695 or more**

January 31 is the final deadline for North Carolinians to enroll in coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace during the third Affordable Care Act open-enrollment period. With just six days left, the clock is ticking and North Carolinians should act now to make sure they have time to shop around, consider their options, and enroll in the plan that best fits their needs and budget.

The North Carolina Navigator Consortium and Enroll America are urging North Carolinians to check out Affordable Care plans, which cover what they need and meet their budgets so they can have peace of mind knowing that in an event of medical emergencies they would be covered. "The Affordable Care Act insurance continues to help many North Carolinians," said Jennifer Simmons, North Carolina Navigator Consortium Director. "We have talked to consumers who have undergone life-saving surgeries using their coverage. The marketplace plans are affordable and meet consumers' budgets. We encourage uninsured North Carolinians to check out their options before the January 31 deadline so they can get covered."

"So far, more than 569,000 North Carolinians have signed up for coverage during this open enrollment period - but there are still many who stand to benefit and need to take action before January 31," said Get Covered America North Carolina State Director Sorien Schmidt. "Last year, we saw an unprecedented surge of interest leading up to the final deadline, and we expect to see the same this year as we approach the end of the month. That's why we are encouraging people to start the process now to make sure there's plenty of time from them to find the best plan for their family."

To help North Carolinians learn about their options, there is free, in-person enrollment help available in communities across the state. Consumers can sit down face-to-face with unbiased local experts who can answer questions and help them make the best coverage decision for them and their families. They can also help people change plans if they are already insured through the Affordable Care Act and want to explore the new options available to them this year. North Carolinians can find someone near them by calling 1-855-733-3711 or using the Get Covered Connector tool at [www.getcoveredamerica.org/connector](http://www.getcoveredamerica.org/connector).

During this open enrollment period, there are new plans and new prices available on the Health Insurance Marketplace, so North Carolinians should shop the options available to them. All Marketplace health plans are required to cover the basics - from preventive care, emergency services, prescriptions, and more. And quality protection comes at an affordable price for most North Carolinians, thanks to the financial assistance available to lower the cost of plans. In fact nearly 9 in 10 of the North Carolinians who have signed up so far are receiving financial help.

Those who don't have health insurance in 2016 may face a fine of \$695 or 2.5% of their income - whichever is greater. And that's on top of having to pay out of pocket for routine medical care and unexpected emergencies. North Carolinians shouldn't delay and risk paying the fine and high medical bills when they can have quality, affordable health insurance that will cover the essentials and protect them from the unexpected.

## College Fair for Anson Students this Saturday

A free College Fair for Anson and Union County students will be held on Saturday, January 30. This event will help local students connect with excellent North Carolina based colleges and universities. It will take place at East Union Middle School in Marshville, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Have questions about how to plan for college? Not sure how to even get started? Come to this free event to learn how. Together, with your school counselor, this event can help you get to your dream college! Attendees can win door prizes from attending schools and free college planning services.

Among the institutions that will be represented are: Brevard College, Elon, Gardner Webb University, Greensboro College, Guilford College, High Point University, Lees McRae College, Meredith College, Montreat College, North Carolina A&T, South Piedmont Community College and Winston Salem State University, and more.

## Free Groceries - Mobile Food Pantry is February 3

The Mobile Food Pantry and CMC Mobile Health Unit will be at Morven United Methodist Church, located at 312 East Main Street, on Wednesday, February 3 at 11 a.m.

Be sure to bring your own bags, boxes or carts to carry your food. Arrive between 9 and 10:30 a.m. If it is raining the day of or before the delivery, contact Anson Crisis Ministry for a recorded message to know if it is cancelled at 704-694-2445. If you have not yet done so, bring proof of your income to register. You can only pick up food for yourself and one other registered household.

This event is sponsored by Anson Crisis Ministry and local United Methodist and Baptist Churches. Interested in volunteering? Call Rev. Larry King at Morven UMC at (704) 851-9940 or Rev. Cindy Lunsford at (828) 891-2753.

## Ladies' Health Luncheon on February 6

The women of Kesler Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church are sponsoring a health luncheon to bring the month of February as Heart Month. The luncheon will be held on Saturday, February 6 at Wadesboro Primary School, located on Highway 52 South across from Coffing Hoist. Activities begin at 11 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m. The theme of the luncheon is "Empowered to Live a Healthy Life in 2016."

Dr. Holly Walters Stegall and Sarah Dean, RN, both of Wadesboro, will be on hand to share important health information and stress the importance of healthy living. This event is particularly targeted towards women. Also on hand for a fitness demonstration will be Pilates instructor Barbara Davis of Chesterfield. She will demonstrate key elements of the Pilates physical fitness system. Other informative activities are also planned.

For more information contact Winnie Bennett at 704-851-9269.

## Parks & Rec Spring Registration Ends January 29

Anson County Parks and Recreation will hold Spring Registration for the following activities:

- Tee Ball Ages: 4-6
- Coach Pitch Ages 7-8
- Minor Baseball Ages 9-10
- Major Baseball Ages 11-12
- Girls Softball Ages 4-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-15
- Micro Soccer Ages 3-4
- Youth Soccer Grades: K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12.

You may come to Little Park to register Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Registration will also take place from 2 to 3:30 p.m. at the schools on the dates below:

- Wednesday, January 27 at Morven Elementary
- Thursday, January 28 at Wadesboro Primary

The deadline to register is Friday, January 29. Cost for athletic programs is \$25. For more information contact Jeff Wainner 704-695-2550, Wendell Small 704-695-2782 or Morris Gatewood 704-694-5751. The email address is [recreation@co.anson.nc.us](mailto:recreation@co.anson.nc.us).

## High School Application Process Explained at February 2 Meeting

There will be a Parent Information Night for current 8th grade students and parents at Anson Middle School on Tuesday, February 2 at 6 p.m. to explain the High School Application Process and to provide information about each of the high school choices.

## HOLLA! to Sponsor Black History Month Reading Challenge

**Award winning literacy advocate Dr. Florita Bell Griffin to lead first session**

February is Black History Month as well as the month of love. HOLLA! (*Helping Our Loved ones Learn and Achieve*) is combining the two for the inaugural Black History Month Reading Challenge, to promote and foster a love for reading in young children. Students in grades three through six who attend the HOLLA! Reading Room each Saturday during the month of February and participate in the reading activities could win cool prizes.

All names of students who have attended each four reading sessions, February 6, 13, 20 and 27, from 10 to 11 a.m. will be entered into a drawing to win the following prizes:

- First Place, a tablet;
- Second Place, a \$25 gift card to Walmart;
- Third Place, a \$15 gift card to McDonald's.

Each winner will also receive a package of age-appropriate books to take home.

**Little Flower Project** A special guest will lead the reading sessions each Saturday. Kicking off the reading challenge on February 6, will be Dr. Florita Bell Griffin, creative director of ARC Communications LLC, a Texas-based visual art communications and publishing company. Griffin, a resident of Houston, Texas and native of Anson County, was recently named a 2016 recipient of the Zora Neale Hurston Award, an annual achievement award administered by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), a division of the American Library Association and sponsored by Harper Collins Publishers.

The Zora Neale Hurston Award Committee selected Griffin in recognition of her outstanding leadership and tireless efforts in promoting literacy and African-American literature through the creation of the Little Flower literacy project. That project works to improve youth literacy, self-esteem and imagination through the use of art, artistic media and African-American literature (storytelling). Little Flower, the project's namesake and storybook heroine, is a young African-American girl growing up during the early days of the civil rights movement.

A vocal anti-bullying advocate, Little Flower uses her sharp mind, big heart and even bigger imagination to inspire and organize her ever expanding circle of multi-cultural friends to address the problem of bullying in their school.

Of special note, Griffin unveiled her Little Flower project at the HOLLA! Center in May 2015. Nearly a year later she returns to continue her efforts to promote literacy by participating in the reading challenge.

Children simply need to show up and participate for an hour each Saturday in February in order to be eligible for the prize drawings. Breakfast will be served at each session.

HOLLA! is a nonprofit organization led by Leon Gatewood to promote literacy and help students reach their full potential. For more information call the HOLLA! Center at (704) 851-3144 and leave a message.



**Dr. Florita Bell Griffin**