

An online experience presented by the North Carolina Museum of History on Saturday, January 30

Join in virtually for the North Carolina Museum of History's 20th Annual African American Cultural Celebration, the statewide kickoff to Black History Month in Raleigh. Named a Top 20 Event by the Southeast Tourism Society since 2015, this year's annual celebration will bring together community organizations, authors, artists, musicians, filmmakers, and scholars to showcase the contributions that African Americans, past and present, have made to North Carolina's history and culture.

This year's digital format will allow the Museum of History to share those contributions in a safe environment to a statewide audience. The theme "Health and Healing" will include a range of information about health disparities and about steps that African Americans can take to promote and preserve their health. Register for online sessions! Become a Museum of History (MOHA) member at the event, and get your membership for half-price!

The event's official hashtag is #AACC2021! The 20th Annual African American Cultural Celebration is held in partnership with the NC African American Heritage Commission and the North Carolina Museum of History Associates. Detailed information and registration is available at the website: www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/aacc-2021.

NC Council on Health Care Coverage Meets to Finalize Guiding Principles to Increase Health Care Coverage for North Carolinians

The North Carolina Council on Health Care Coverage held its last meeting today to finalize principles to help guide Governor Roy Cooper and legislative leaders as they consider options to increase affordable and comprehensive health coverage for North Carolinians. Governor Cooper provided closing remarks at the meeting.

The Council is convened by the Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy, which is led by Dr. Mark McClellan. Council members include bipartisan members of the General Assembly and representatives from a variety of sectors including business, nonprofit, and health care.

Since beginning its work in December, the Council has heard from a variety of experts on issues such as Medicaid expansion, access to behavioral health services, and options for private insurance market reform. The group has also examined the impact that the lack of coverage has had on businesses and employees in the state. During its meeting on January 8th, Council Members worked collaboratively developing draft guiding principles that were considered at the final meeting.

"The principles approved by the Council will serve as a strong foundation that we can build upon as we work to increase access to health coverage in our state," said Governor Cooper. "I look forward to working with legislative leaders in the months ahead to develop specific solutions that can help get coverage to the more than 1.2 million North Carolinians who don't have it today."

The principles approved by the Council today included maximizing health coverage, ensuring program simplicity, enhancing the health of North Carolina, and ensuring health system sustainability. The group also highlighted the importance of the efficient use of taxpayer dollars, strengthening rural communities, reducing disparities, expanding access to and coverage of behavioral health services, and supporting the business community. The full list of final principles as well as a summary of the Council's work will be compiled into a final report by the Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy. The guiding principles will be shared with members of the North Carolina General Assembly and other leaders across the state.

"The diversity of perspectives and experiences that Council Members have brought to this process has been key to its success," said NCDHHS Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. "I appreciate the commitment and hard work of the Council Members and I am confident that these guiding principles will serve as an important roadmap as we address the urgent health care needs in our state."

Anson County Land Use Plan Vision 2040

Anson County is required by state statute to update its Comprehensive Land Use Plan on a regular basis. This Land Use Plan guides the County Board of Commissioners, County Planning Board, and County Staff in making day-to-day decisions related to land use, capital improvements, and regional coordination. After a year of gathering input, creating maps, and setting goals the Anson County Land Use Steering Committee and County Staff are almost ready to present the final copy to the Anson County Planning Board and Board of Commissioners.

The Vision 2040 Land Use Plan envisions an Anson County that will be a dynamic and inclusive county that celebrates its rural heritage and is committed to creating a prosperous, livable community for all residents. The Plan is based on the five guiding principles of Livability, Economic Growth, Community Growth, Natural Environment, and Services.

Before presenting the final plan, the steering committee wants to give the community another opportunity to provide input. Interested residents of Anson County can go to www.surveymonkey.com/r/AnsonPlan and fill out the survey in approximately 15 minutes. Or you can contact Liam Brailey at LBrailey@co.anson.nc.us. The Survey will close on February 1.

Wildlife Commission Seeks Public Comment on Proposed 2021-2022 Rule Changes

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission has opened the public comment period for proposed changes to agency regulations related to wildlife management, inland fisheries and game lands for the 2021-2022 seasons. The comment period will be open through Monday, Feb. 1, 2021.

Comments may be submitted online at this website ncpaws.org/PAWS/WRC/PublicComments/PublicComments.aspx, emailed to regulations@ncwildlife.org (must include name, phone number and mailing address in e-mail) or mailed to: Rule-Making Coordinator, N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, 1701 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1700.

The public can also provide comments at one of the public hearings the Commission will conduct in January.

For more information, including the schedule for the upcoming public hearings, visit ncwildlife.org/proposed-regulations.

NCDOR Will Follow The IRS And Begin Accepting Individual Income Tax Returns on February 12

The North Carolina Department of Revenue (NCDOR) will follow the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and officially open the 2021 individual income tax filing season and begin accepting and processing individual income tax returns on Friday, Feb. 12. Tax processing procedures and guidelines force the NCDOR to follow the IRS opening.

Taxpayers who file before the opening date will receive their acknowledgements for electronically filed (eFiled) returns beginning Feb. 12.

According to the IRS, tax season will begin later than usual because they need time to do additional programming and testing of their systems following the Dec. 27 tax law changes that provided a second round of Economic Impact Payments.

Taxpayers are encouraged to file their taxes electronically; it is safer, more convenient, and more accurate than traditional paper filing. Free online filing (eFile) options for qualified taxpayers are available through the NCDOR.gov website using NCfreefile. Eligibility requirements for NCfreefile are available at: www.ncdor.gov/ncfreefile. Note: taxpayers must start at the agency website, www.ncdor.gov, to file their taxes electronically.

Due to the NCDOR's enhanced identity theft protection measures, some refunds may take longer than normal, which is 6 weeks for electronically-filed returns and 12 weeks for paper returns. Filing returns early also reduces the risk of tax refund fraud.

Tax returns are due this year on Thursday, April 15. Learn more about filing individual income tax returns electronically at www.ncdor.gov/file-pay/file-individuals.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Replace standard power strips with advanced power strips to save energy. Advanced power strips look like ordinary power strips, but they have built-in features that are designed to reduce the amount of energy used by standby electronics that consume energy even when they're not in use (also known as phantom load).

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) estimates that the average home loses \$200 annually to energy wasted by phantom load

Pee Dee Electric
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative
Powering a Brighter Future

Church News

FEBRUARY 27

Community Outreach Event. Free household items & paper products. First come, first served basis. By Lamb of God Church, 10am at 118 West Wade St in Wadesboro. Info 843-623-3777

ONGOING

Virtual Services

At Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Sundays 11-11:30am with Zoom: www.zoom.com or use Zoom app, click "join a meeting" and enter Meeting ID: 385 789 5966 Password: 699988. Or join via Zoom audio: 646-876-9923, same Meeting ID & Password. Questions & info 704-690-7577

Events

FEBRUARY 2

Board of Commissioners Meet 6pm for the regular monthly meeting. This meeting will be live-streamed from the Boardroom. Citizens are restricted from attending this meeting to reduce the spread of COVID-19, but are strongly encouraged to view the meeting online. Visit youtube.com and search for Anson Commissioners. Citizens may participate with questions and/or concerns by sending an email to questions@co.anson.nc.us

FEBRUARY 3

Free Groceries

For families in need Mobile Food Pantry at Austin Grove Baptist Church, located at Wingate United Methodist Church, located at 111 Hinson Street in Wingate. Register 11am-1pm, truck arrives between 1-2pm. Call for details 704-694-2445

FEBRUARY 27

Community Outreach Event. Free household items & paper products. First come, first served basis. By Lamb of God Church, 10am at 118 West Wade St in Wadesboro. Info 843-623-3777

ONGOING EVENTS

Free Food

Distribution at Feed My Lambs every Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 1-4pm. Located at 2290 Hwy 74 West, Wadesboro. 704-695-1820

Thrift Store

Open at Feed My Lambs every Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 1-5pm. Located at 2290 Hwy 74 West, Wadesboro. 704-695-1820

Senior Box

Program at Feed My Lambs starts the third Tuesday each month for seniors only. Located at 2290 Hwy 74 West, Wadesboro. 704-695-1820

Food Commodities Food Distributed Free every Wednesday at 9am & 2nd Saturday of each month at 9am at Burnsville Recreation & Learning Ctr, Hwy 742N across from Burnsville Fire Dept. Info 704-826-8182

THE CHURCH CALENDAR IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THESE SPONSORS

Auto Plus C&M AUTO SUPPLY
Your locally owned Auto Parts Store
Hwy 74, Wadesboro • 704-694-5167

Williamson Wrecker Service
Since 1972
704-694-4545

Anson Radiator
125 Stanback Ferry Road
Wadesboro 704-289-7999
Autos • Freight Trucks
Farm Equipment
General Repairs

Papa Joe's PIZZA
Plank Road Shopping Center
Wadesboro • 704-694-6666

Badcock HOME FURNITURE & more
Hwy. 52, South • P.O. Box 856
Wadesboro, NC 28170
Ph: 704-694-4178
www.badcock.com

PIEDMONT FLOORING
All Major Brands of Floor Covering
Serta & Orderest Bedding
214 West Main Street in Marshville
704-624-2211
MAYTAG • FRIGIDAIRE • CROSLLEY

From Your Friends At PARSONS DRUG
Serving Anson County for over 100 years
"On The Square"
Wadesboro • 704-694-2218

Glenn Trexler & Sons Logging, Inc.
"Freedom of Worship is a Precious Commodity"
WADESBORO

PEE DEE ELECTRIC
Hwy. 52 S. Wadesboro
Midway Rd. Rockingham
"Owned by those we serve."

UWHARRIE BANK
704-694-2122
Member FDIC

H. W. Little & Company
Hardware & More!
Uptown Wadesboro
704-694-2214

Henry's Body Shop
704-848-4989
4225 Stanbackferry
Ice Plant Rd • Lilesville
Owner: Robbie Henry

Five-Year Statewide Bird Survey to Begin in March

The NC Bird Atlas looks to harness the power of birdwatchers to advance avian research and conservation

A group of government agencies, universities and nonprofit organizations will launch the first-ever NC Bird Atlas survey this March. The statewide community science survey will harness the power of thousands of volunteer birdwatchers to map the distribution and abundance of birds from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Outer Banks. The observations will give researchers a comprehensive picture of bird populations across North Carolina and help wildlife officials, land managers and conservation organizations make important conservation decisions about the state's avian population. Organizers are starting volunteer recruitment today and encourage birding enthusiasts of all experience levels to get involved by visiting NCBirdAtlas.org.

Bird atlases are large-scale, standardized surveys and have taken place in states across the country since the 1970s. The NC Bird Atlas, led by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and partner groups, including NC State University, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, Audubon North Carolina, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, University of North Carolina at Wilmington and Catawba College, will collect five years of survey data starting this spring. The survey will divide the state into 937 "blocks", each roughly 10 square miles. Volunteer observers will work with regional coordinators to fan out across each block over the course of the project and record the birds they see. All of the data will be submitted through eBird (ebird.org), an online, user-friendly database of crowd-sourced bird observations.

Participation in the NC Bird Atlas is like birding, except that participants will be asked to slow down. Rather than trying to observe as many bird species as possible, the breeding portion of the Atlas requires observers to watch individual birds closely and make note of behaviors. For example, an observer watching a Carolina Wren might take note of whether the bird is singing, or perhaps gathering twigs and leaves in its beak to build a nest.

"More people than ever before are learning to identify the cardinals, chickadees, and all the other bird species at their backyard feeders," says Scott Anderson, bird conservation biologist at the N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission. "The NC Bird Atlas is a great opportunity for people to use these new-found skills and give a little back. You'll deepen your knowledge of birds, have fun outside with new friends and contribute to a widespread and critical research project that ultimately helps us better understand and protect birds."

The project comes at an important time for bird conservation. A recent study published in the journal "Science" documented the loss of nearly three billion North American birds since 1970, primarily as a result of human activities. The data collected during the NC Atlas study will help prioritize conservation to benefit the most imperiled North Carolina birds.

"We are excited to see this project get off the ground," Anderson noted. "It's been years in the making and is very important to the future of bird conservation in our state. Our agency is fortunate to have such amazing partners to help launch this program. Wildlife in North Carolina is for everyone, and we encourage participation by a diversity of North Carolinians to benefit our diversity of birds, hence our motto, 'People Count. Birds Count'."

About the NC Bird Atlas The NC Bird Atlas is a statewide community science project led by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and partner groups, including NC State University, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, Audubon North Carolina, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, University of North Carolina at Wilmington and Catawba College. The project's mission is to mobilize thousands of volunteer birdwatchers across the state to log all bird species over the span of five years. The data collected will help state wildlife officials, land managers, and conservation organizations make important conservation decisions. More information about the NC Bird Atlas and volunteer opportunities visit NCBirdAtlas.org, or email coordinator@ncbirdatlas.org.