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Sheriff Urges Community to Minimize False Alarms to 911

In a release from the Sheriff's Office: Anson County 911 Operations Center received over 2400 burglar alarm calls in 2011 that were later found to be false alarms. About half of these calls were inside the Wadesboro city limits and remaining ones out in the county. In a majority of these calls either a city police officer or a deputy sheriff had to be dispatched to the location to investigate. False alarms account for almost ten percent of all calls handled by the 911 Center.

Anson County Sheriff Tommy Allen, who oversees the 911 Operations Center, said that this is a real drain on manpower for his 911 staff as well as law enforcement. "We understand there are going to be a percentage of false alarms. The system is built to handle those that are weather related, equipment related and even when someone forgets to close a door or turn something on or off. But when someone accidentally sets off their alarm themselves and then does not bother to call their alarm company or 911 to report an accidental activation; or they can't give us their own security code when we call them; then we still have to dispatch an officer. That's just simply irresponsible when a simple telephone call would work," Sheriff Allen said.

The county has an alarm ordinance that requires a fine of \$25 and more for the alarm user after the second false alarm in a calendar year. "We work with individuals when we know the alarms are weather or equipment related because these things happen sometimes. We have excellent alarm companies serving Anson County and they bend over backwards in working with us and their customers. It would work much better if some users would be a little more responsible. The county's alarm ordinance is simply to encourage users to be more responsible and help us use our resources to respond to true emergency calls," Allen said.

Sheriff Allen encourages property owners to have alarm systems, as burglars look for houses without systems. Burglar and fire alarm systems can often reduce your homeowners insurance with some companies. Exterior lighting is another way to reduce your chances of a burglary. As technology develops and prices come down, affordable cameras and recording equipment also discourage thefts.

If you have any questions about your home alarm system, please contact your provider. If you want to look into obtaining a burglary and fire alarm system the Sheriff suggests talking with a neighbor or friend who already has a system and get a recommendation from them.

Conservation Reserve Program General Sign-up for Anson County

Acting Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services (FFAS) Michael Scuse announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will conduct a four-week Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up, beginning on March 12 and ending on April 6. CRP has a 25-year legacy of successfully protecting the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

"It is USDA's goal to ensure that we use CRP to address our most critical resource issues," said Scuse. "CRP is an important program for protecting our most environmentally sensitive lands from erosion and sedimentation, and for ensuring the sustainability of our groundwater, lakes, rivers, ponds and streams. As always, we expect strong competition to enroll acres into CRP, and we urge interested producers to maximize their environmental benefits and to make cost-effective offers."

CRP is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help them use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion and develop wildlife habitat. In return, USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. Producers with expiring contracts and producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP. Producers also are encouraged to look into CRP's other enrollment opportunities offered on a continuous, non-competitive, sign-up basis.

Currently, about 30 million acres are enrolled in CRP; and contracts on an estimated 6.5 million acres will expire on Sept. 30, 2012.

Offers for CRP contracts are ranked according to the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) collects data for each of the EBI factors based on the relative environmental benefits for the land offered. Each eligible offer is ranked in comparison to all other offers and selections made from that ranking. FSA uses the following EBI factors to assess the environmental benefits for the land offered:

- Wildlife habitat benefits resulting from covers on contract acreage;
- Water quality benefits from reduced erosion, runoff & leaching;
- On-farm benefits from reduced erosion;
- Benefits that will likely endure beyond the contract period;
- Air quality benefits from reduced wind erosion; and
- Cost.

Over the past 25 years, farmers, ranchers, conservationists, hunters, fishermen and other outdoor enthusiasts have made CRP the largest and one of the most important in USDA's conservation portfolio. CRP continues to make major contributions to national efforts to improve water and air quality, prevent soil erosion by protecting the most sensitive areas including those prone to flash flooding and runoff. At the same time, CRP has helped increase populations of pheasants, quail, ducks, and other rare species, like the sage grouse, the lesser prairie chicken, and others. Highlights of CRP include:

- CRP has restored more than two million acres of wetlands and two million acres of riparian buffers;
- Each year, CRP keeps more than 600 million pounds of nitrogen and more than 100 million pounds of phosphorus from flowing into our nation's streams, rivers, and lakes.
- CRP provides \$1.8 billion annually to landowners—dollars that make their way into local economies, supporting small businesses and creating jobs; and
- CRP is the largest private lands carbon sequestration program in the country. By placing vulnerable cropland into conservation, CRP sequesters carbon in plants and soil, and reduces both fuel and fertilizer usage. In 2010, CRP resulted in carbon sequestration equal to taking almost 10 million cars off the road.

In 2011, USDA enrolled a record number of acres of private working lands in conservation programs, working with more than 500,000 farmers and ranchers to implement conservation practices that clean the air we breathe, filter the water we drink, and prevent soil erosion. Moreover, the Obama Administration, with Agriculture Secretary Vilsack's leadership, has worked tirelessly to strengthen rural America, implement the Farm Bill, maintain a strong farm safety net, and create opportunities for America's farmers and ranchers. U.S. agriculture is currently experiencing one of its most productive periods in American history thanks to the productivity, resiliency, and resourcefulness of producers.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, visit the Anson County FSA Service Center at 1758 Morven Rd Wadesboro or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Students Help Out with Partnership for Children's Barn Blast



Pictured here are the student volunteers who helped with the Barn Blast on Friday, January 27th. Read all about it on page 6.

The Tams Sing Be Young, Be Foolish, Be Happy

In a release from the Arts Council: The Tams are coming to the Ansonia on Saturday, February 11...a perfect way to celebrate the Valentine weekend.

The Tams. The name is synonymous with beach music and all that is shag. There will be dancing in the aisles when RL Smith and the original Tams sing such hits as *I've Been Hurt*, *What Kind of Fool*, and *Hey Girl Don't Bother Me*. They will also introduce some of their newer work.



The show is being sponsored by Super Bee Productions and the Anson County Arts Council (ACAC). Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. and the show will start at 7. All tickets (reserved seating only) cost \$25. The box office, located at the Anson County Arts Council at 110 South Rutherford Street right next to the Ansonia Theatre, will be open from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and Wednesday 5 to 7 p.m. There will be a few tickets available at Lacy's. It is very likely that this will sell out so be sure to reserve your seat early. If you can't get by during box office hours you may leave a message at 704-694-4950 or at ansonart@windstream.net. You may use the website (www.ansoniatheatre.com) to pay for tickets with PayPal, but you must talk to someone to select seats.

SPCC to Have Black History Month Celebration on Feb. 15

South Piedmont Community College will have a Black History Month celebration on Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 10:45 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Charlotte Pipe and Foundry Company Conference Center in Building A on SPCC's Old Charlotte Highway Campus. The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture will present two programs during the event. "Dance, Dance, Dance" is "an energetic lecture/demonstration that links the historical and cultural significance of dance forms through the ages and across continents, including Funga, the Ring Shout, the Black Bottom, the Shimmy, the Stanky Leg and more," according to the Gantt Center's website.

The Gantt Center will also present "Music of the Movement," featuring music that inspired and strengthened those on the front lines of the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Also, Patricia Poland, genealogist at the Union County Public Library, will give a presentation on Dr. John S. Massey, the first black physician in Union County, and there will be a panel discussion on the importance of developing a personal brand.

The event is open to public. Admission is free. Reservations can be made by emailing counselingdepartment@students.spcc.edu.

The Black History Month celebration is being sponsored by the SPCC Student Government Association and by IMPACT, SPCC's minority male mentoring program.

February is Sign Up Month at Field of Dreams

Field of Dreams, located on Highway 74 in Polkton, will be holding sign ups for baseball, t-ball and softball every Thursday and Saturday in the month of February. If you are interested in baseball and are between the ages of 4 and 12, or if you are interested in softball and are between the ages of 7 and 16, then you are eligible to play.

On Thursday, February 9, 16 and 23 you may come and sign up for spring sports. Also on Saturday, February 11, 18 and 25, come between 10 a.m. and 12 noon. The final day to get your name on the list is March 1.

The cost for t-ball is \$35, baseball and softball are each \$55.

In addition, on February 28 and again on March 1, skills days will be held for those players who wish to come out and learn more of the fundamentals of ball sports. The time is from 6 until 7:30 p.m. If you are interested or need more information, please contact Tony Thuleen at tthuleen8@yahoo.com.

If your child is interested in having a Babe Ruth League for ages 13-15, Anson County athletes will be playing with Stanly County. Contact Tony Thuleen at the above email address if interested.

Scholarship Available Through Veteran's Office

The North Carolina Association of County Veterans Service Officers (NACVSO) offers a one-time scholarship in the amount of \$500 in memory of deceased veteran service officers. Deadline is March 1, 2012 for submitting application. The applicant must be a high school senior and a child of an honorably discharged veteran residing in the state of North Carolina.

If you need more information or would like to apply, please stop by Veteran Services Office at 111 South Greene Street in Wadesboro or contact Mr. Ted Ward at (704) 694-4418 or tward@co.anson.nc.us.

Wildlife Comm. Proposes Night Hunting of Coyotes & Feral Hogs

The NC Wildlife Resources Commission is inviting the public to comment on proposed rules that will allow the hunting of feral swine and coyotes at night with a light. The proposed seasons would be year-round, and would allow the hunting of feral swine and coyotes on Sundays on private lands with archery equipment. Night hunting is one means of controlling the population of coyotes and feral swine, both of which are non-native to North Carolina.

The public can comment online, email regulations@ncwildlife.org or attend one of the following five public hearings across the state, which will begin at 7 p.m.

- March 20 at Iredell County Agricultural Extension Center, 444 Bristol Dr. Statesville, N.C.
- March 21 at District Court #1, Buncombe County Courthouse, 60 Court Plaza Asheville, N.C.
- March 26 at Bladen County Courthouse, 106 W. Broad Street, Elizabethtown, N.C.
- March 28 at Room 153, Fulford Building, Pitt Community College, 4381 County Home Rd., Greenville, N.C.
- March 29 at Centennial Campus Center for Wildlife Education, 1751 Varsity Dr., Raleigh, N.C.

Blood Drive Today

Wednesday, February 8 at South Piedmont Community College, 680 Highway 74 West in Polkton, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Blood Drive at PPES February 15

Peachland-Polkton Elementary School will sponsor a Red Cross Blood Drive on Wednesday, February 15, from 2 to 6:30 p.m. in the gym. Please enter at the main entrance of the school to check in, and you will be directed to the gym. In appreciation for sponsoring the drive, the school will receive much needed supplies for the students.

For more information on the drive or how to donate blood contact Amanda Drake, PPES School Nurse, at 704-272-8061.

Compassionate Friends Meet Thursday

The Compassionate Friends, a support group for families who have lost a child of any age, will meet on Thursday, February 9 at 7 p.m. in the Training Room at Pee Dee Electric on Highway 52 South in Wadesboro.

For information call 704-694-8774 or 704-475-5005.

Opposition to Fracking Meeting Sunday

A group called Anson County's W.A.L.L., Protecting our Water, Air, Land and Lives, will hold a meeting this Sunday, February 12 at 4 p.m. at Grace Senior Center in Wadesboro to discuss their opposition to "fracking," hydraulic fracturing for natural gas. The public is invited to attend.

For more information you can contact Anson County's W.A.L.L. at PO Box 563, Ansonville NC 28007 or call 704-826-6324.

Mystery Dinner Theatre at Olivet UMC

Everyone loves a good mystery. Especially a mystery that involves enjoying a three course meal...to die for! Olivet United Methodist Church in Lilesville invites everyone to come out and join them for an evening of fun and great food during the presentation of their Mystery Dinner Theatre. Come hungry and ready for a great story. The fun begins at 6:30 p.m.

Admission covers the cost of the show and dinner, and the funds are being raised for Youth Missions. Reservations are required. For more information call Rev. Norm Jones, Lilesville Charge of the UMC, at 704-848-4694 or email rev.norm@alumni.duke.edu.

Wingate University Celebrates Black History Month with Art Exhibit

In celebration of Black History Month, Wingate University presents selections from the private art collection of Patrick and Judy Diamond. The exhibit is in Helms Gallery of the Batte Center now through Feb. 20. Artists included in the exhibit are Benny Andrews, Romare Bearden and Elizabeth Catlett.

Exhibit hours run Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A reception will be held on Feb. 17 at 6 p.m.

Look inside for special inserts from IGA Forbes Jewelers