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Serving Anson County and the Municipalities of Ansonville, Lilesville, McFarlan, Morven, Peachland, Polkton and Wades-

## Wadesboro Restaurant Busted for Food Stamp Fraud

**Ladybug Family Restaurant and restaurant employee agree to pay \$62,000 to resolve fraud**

Ladybug Family Restaurant, Inc. and Retha Kendall Lindsey have agreed to pay \$62,000 in damages and civil penalties to resolve allegations of food stamp fraud, announced Anne M. Tompkins, United States Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina on January 24. US Attorney Tompkins was joined in making the announcement by Karen Citizen-Wilcox, Special Agent in Charge, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Investigation of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA-OIG).

On October 10, 2012, the United States filed a civil complaint against the Ladybug restaurant and Lindsey, who was employed by the restaurant, for violation of the United States False Claims Act. According to the filed complaint, the Defendants used other people's Electronic Benefit Transaction ("EBT") cards, formerly known as food stamps, to purchase food and other items for the Ladybug restaurants. The complaint alleged that from about August 2011 to about June 2012, the Defendants and others used EBT cards belonging to other people in at least 49 transactions to make bulk purchases of meat and other items for use at the Ladybug restaurants.

The United States and Defendants submitted to the U.S. District Court a consent motion for a final order pursuant to which Defendants will pay \$21,116.01 in damages and \$40,883.99 in civil penalties under the False Claims Act. The proposed final judgment is subject to approval by a United States District Court Judge.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") provides assistance to low or no income individuals to allow them to purchase qualified food and nutrition items. Benefits are issued in the form of EBT cards similar to debit cards that can be swiped in a merchant's credit card machine.

The civil action arose out of an investigation by the Inspector General's Office of the US Department of Agriculture, which administers the SNAP program. The False Claims Act allows the United States to recover triple the amount paid in fraudulent claims plus civil penalties of \$5,000 to \$11,000 per false claim. Each time an unauthorized party uses an EBT card constitutes a false claim to the United States subjecting the party to treble damages and civil penalties. The complaint in this case alleges that Defendants engaged in at least 49 fraudulent transactions. Each transaction is a false claim against the United States.

In making her announcement, US Attorney Tompkins stated, "The SNAP program is in place to ensure that low income families and individuals are able to buy food staples to combat hunger and prevent malnutrition. Fraud on this program harms not only every American taxpayer but the vulnerable recipients who need it the most. My office will continue to use the False Claims Act to vigorously investigate and prosecute allegations of fraud on important government programs such as SNAP."

Special Agent in Charge Citizen-Wilcox stated, "USDA-OIG aggressively investigates allegations of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) fraud with the goal of rooting out such activity to ensure that taxpayers' funds are reserved for those who are truly in need. We would like to thank US Attorney's Office for their efforts in helping to combat SNAP fraud."

The case was investigated by USDA-OIG. The prosecution was handled by Assistant United States Attorneys Paul B. Taylor and Jonathan H. Ferry of the US Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina.

## Rabies Confirmed in Anson County

On Tuesday, February 5 the North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health confirmed that a skunk submitted by Anson County Animal Control was positive for rabies. This skunk was found in a dog pen at a residence on Old Plank Road in Peachland on Saturday, February 2. The owner shot the skunk and reported it to Anson County Animal Control.

The citizen used personal protective equipment in removing the skunk from the dog pen so that it could be submitted for testing. The dogs that had come in contact with the skunk did not have current rabies vaccinations, therefore, according to North Carolina General Statute, the dogs had to be euthanized.

Another link to Anson County and rabies happened in Gaston County last week. A resident of Gaston County was travelling through Anson County on or about December 15, 2012, and discovered an injured kitten on Highway 109 South near Camden Presbyterian Church. The lady stopped and picked up the kitten and transported it to her veterinarian in Gaston County where the kitten's leg was amputated and all vaccinations, including rabies, were administered to the kitten. Last week the kitten became ill with paralytic symptoms; the veterinarian euthanized the animal and submitted it to the State Laboratory for rabies testing. This animal, also, was positive for rabies.

Carol Ann Gibson with the Anson County Health Department said, "This is a wake up call to all citizens to have your dogs, cats and ferrets vaccinated against rabies at four months of age and to be certain that the vaccinations remain current. The first vaccination is for one year, and each rabies vaccination thereafter is current for three years. Rabies vaccinations must be administered by a licensed veterinarian."

Gibson reiterated, "It is the responsibility of pet owners to be proactive and be certain that their animals have current rabies vaccinations. It is not only a responsibility, but is a law, that dogs, cats and ferrets over four months of age be vaccinated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian and that these vaccinations are kept current."

## Labor Department Urges Businesses to Apply for Safety Awards

The NC Department of Labor is now accepting applications from businesses that qualify for a workplace safety award. Safety awards are given to companies that have above-average worker safety and health programs.

"A safety award shows employees and the community that you are committed to a safe work environment," state Labor Commissioner Cherie Berry said. "A good safety record is something to be proud of, and businesses deserve to be recognized for their efforts."

Businesses that qualify for the award must meet two requirements. They must be free of fatalities at the site for which they are applying. The site's injury and illness rate also must be at least 50 percent below that of their industry's average rate.

Award recipients will be honored in their communities throughout the state at safety awards banquets co-sponsored by the NC Department of Labor and local chambers of commerce and other organizations.

For more information on the Safety Awards Program or to download an application, go to the NCDOL website, [www.nclabor.com/osh/etta/safety\\_programs/safety\\_award.htm](http://www.nclabor.com/osh/etta/safety_programs/safety_award.htm). The deadline for submissions is February 15.

## Kindergarteners at Lilesville Elementary School Create African Dance Masks



Mrs. Sammie Williams Kindergarten Class at Lilesville Elementary School completed a guidance project in recognition of Black History Month, which is celebrated throughout the month of February. The students received a lesson on being proud of who you are and respecting cultural differences.

The students created African dance masks which were proudly displayed in a parade around the classroom. The guidance activity was led by Mrs. Frances McClendon, the school guidance counselor.

## In Honor of Black History Month - Doctor Edward L. Thomas

*This is a contribution by historian and genealogist Steve Bailey:* Doctor Edward L. Thomas, 1884-1928. The first African American doctor in Anson County that I am aware of was Dr. Edward Lorenzo Thomas who was practicing medicine in Wadesboro as early as December of 1907. In December of 1909 he was Editor of an African American owned newspaper, "The Enterprise," published in Wadesboro. In 1910 and 1911 Doctor Thomas purchased several acres of land on Salisbury Street, and was a trustee of an unnamed AME Zion Church, also on Salisbury Street.

Dr. Thomas' first wife was Bessie Clara Brown who died in Wadesboro on April 29, 1913, and was buried in Orangeburg, SC. Dr. Thomas then married Ellie Louise Reeves on October 14, 1914, in Wadesboro. She was one of the first teachers to be employed at Anson County Training School in 1920 where she taught kindergarten and music. Anson County Training School would be renamed Woodlawn School in 1960, then renamed JR Faison School in 1961.

Dr. Thomas was a very busy man during the 20 years he lived here as stated in the history I compiled of him. He was delivering babies up until mid 1927 while he was still a resident here.

Dr. Thomas moved to Mecklenburg County, NC around 1926, and passed away there in 1928. Even though his death occurred in Mecklenburg County, his will is recorded in Anson County Will Book F page 320

I only wish there were biographies about early African American doctors here in Anson County, but there are not. I have found bits and pieces of their practices by accident as I conducted research for my genealogy clients.

While Dr. Thomas arrived here in Wadesboro in 1907 and made himself well known, there was another African American doctor who arrived in Wadesboro in 1909 by the name of Doctor Fredrick Watkins. All that I can recall of Dr. Watkins is his certification certificate and a mention of him in one issue of a newspaper. Among other African American doctors in Anson County was Doctor William Charles Baucom who grew up in the Madison Grove Church community who was practicing medicine here in the 1920's. His sister was Rosa Little who was a resident at Lillie Bennett Nursing Center over 10 years ago. There was a Doctor Massey who was here in the 1930's until his death around 1949. Doctor Liggin and Doctor Kenneth Chambers were practicing medicine in Wadesboro in the 1950's. By Steve Bailey [genealogy1959@yahoo.com](mailto:genealogy1959@yahoo.com).

## Steve and Nichole Carpenter Appointed to Young Farmer & Rancher State Board

Representatives from Anson County attended Farm Bureau's Young Farmer & Ranchers Conference held January 25 to 27 in Greensboro. The Farm Bureau Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) is for young women and men 18-35 years of age. It provides opportunities to develop leadership traits, public speaking skills, and exposure to current issues in agriculture from state and national leaders.

This year's conference was themed "Growing Tomorrow's Future." Representatives from Anson County included Steve and Nichole Carpenter of Wadesboro, Jeff Morgan and Jessica Anderson of Polkton, as well as Cody Smith of Oakboro.

The YF&R Leadership Conference is where young Farm Bureau members meet other YF&Rs from across North Carolina. Future leaders share similar concerns and challenges as well as packed workshops for agriculture. Getting together with friends for top-notch speakers and info packed workshops is a tradition. The conference happens every year at absolutely no cost to YF&Rs. It's Farm Bureau's way of saying, "Be a part of something BIG."

Sessions representatives from Anson County attended were entitled, "Agricultural Roundtable - Livestock Issues," "Farm Bill & Estate Tax Update," "Opportunities in Specialty Crops & Local Foods," and "Ag in the Classroom."

Steve and Nichole Carpenter will serve on the State Board for the 2013 YF&R Committee. For more information on the Young Farmers & Ranchers Program contact Jessica Anderson at [Jessica\\_a\\_anderson@ncsu.edu](mailto:Jessica_a_anderson@ncsu.edu) or the Farm Bureau office at 704-694-4144.

## Weekly Art Workshop Offers You the Chance to be Creative

Got the winter blues? The Arts Council has the perfect solution! Enjoy an afternoon being creative.

Drop by Olde Mill Gallery's studio (in the Lockhart-Taylor Center, 514 North Washington Street in Wadesboro) any Tuesday afternoon and work on whatever you're interested in - drawing and painting, jewelry making, needlework, wood carving, scrapbooking, rug making, model building, origami, or any other kind of portable hobby or craft.

The beautiful gallery studio has lots of workspace and wonderful lighting, and you'll get inspiration from fellow artists and hobbyists. So bring your supplies and join them next Tuesday. It's free! All you have to do is show up! They'll be there from 1 p.m. 'til 4 p.m., but you can come and go as you please. Questions? Call 704-695-0991.

## It's Not Too Late for Tickets to Art & Soul

Don't miss the fun this Saturday night at the Lockhart-Taylor Center when the Anson County Arts Council hosts Art & Soul. The Bobby Plair All-Stars, including Anson County's own Carl Ratliff on saxophone, will play mellow dinner music as you feast on a soul food buffet of fried chicken, ham biscuits, collards, pintos, and more old-time favorites. Following dinner the band will crank up the energy level as the dancing begins. You don't dance? Then join the other spectators watching those who do!

Tickets (\$25) are available in Wadesboro at the Anson County Arts Council (704-694-4950), Lacy's, and the Chamber of Commerce. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Be part of this popular event on Saturday, February 16, from 6:30 'til 10 instead of wishing you'd been there when you hear about it next week. Get your ticket today!

## Democratic Party Meets February 21

The Anson County Democratic Party will hold their monthly meeting on Thursday, February 21 at 6 p.m. at the Hampton B. Allen Library. All citizens are asked to be present. For more information contact Vancine Sturdivant at (704) 848-4412.

## Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center Monthly Meeting

The Burnsville Recreation and Learning Center Volunteers announce their regular monthly meeting this Saturday morning, February 16th. The time for breakfast is 9:30 a.m. for all who attend. The meeting will follow at 10 a.m. The community is invited to come out and participate. Politician Mark Broody will be on hand to meet and get acquainted with attendees.

BRLC Volunteers Vinnie Daniels and Joe F. Thomas will be honored at this time.

## New Beginnings to Meet February 18

The New Beginnings cancer support group will meet on Monday, February 18 at 6 p.m. at the Ladybug Restaurant in Wadesboro. For more information contact Debbie Wright at 704-695-1420.

## Toys for Tots Board Meeting Next Tuesday

The Anson County Toys for Tots Executive Board meeting will be held Tuesday, February 19 at 5:30 p.m. at the Grace Senior Center. All members are asked to be present.

For more information contact Dr. Bernice Bennett at (704) 848-4085 or Jennifer Tarlton at (704) 694-3115.

## Brown Creek Soil & Water Meeting

The Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation District monthly board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 26 at 10 a.m. at the BCSWCD office. It is located at 1758 Morven Road in Wadesboro.

## Diabetic Support Group to Meet

The Diabetic Support group will hold a meeting on Thursday, February 28, from 10:30 a.m. to noon at Calvary Episcopal Church in Wadesboro. Speaker Dr. Lolade Cash of Supreme Dental will present the topic, Dental Health to Prevent Complications with Diabetes.

For more information please contact Ruth Hildreth at 704-694-3979.

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