

# THE EXPRESS

205 West Morgan Street • Wadesboro, NC 28170 • 704-694-2480 • [TheExpressNews@gmail.com](mailto:TheExpressNews@gmail.com) • [www.TheExpressNewspaper.com](http://www.TheExpressNewspaper.com)

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

## SBI Investigating Apparent Murder of Six Year Old and Attempted Suicide in Anson County

According to Polkton Police, Michael Rufus Roach murdered his six year old daughter

On Monday, March 24 the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) issued this release on a tragic event in Anson County:

The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) has been requested by the Polkton Police Department to investigate an apparent murder and attempted suicide in Anson County.

At approximately 3:00 a.m. on Monday, March 24, 2025, a woman called 911 to report that her young daughter and vehicle had been taken from her residence in Polkton, reportedly by the child's father. Deputies with the Anson County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) responded to the 911 call and a "be on the lookout" or BOLO was issued for the vehicle, a Jeep Liberty.

Just before 8:00 a.m. on Monday, the vehicle was spotted by an ACSO deputy in Wadesboro. ACSO deputies pursued the vehicle. After a few minutes the vehicle wrecked off Little Creek Road near Old Winfield Road. A female child inside the vehicle suffered a gunshot wound and was pronounced deceased at the scene. The male driver also had a gunshot wound and was transported to the hospital in critical condition. While it is early in the investigation, it is believed that the child was shot in the car by the male driver. It is also believed that the male driver then shot himself.

This is an ongoing investigation. Additional information will be provided at a later time.

**Polkton Police Chief Tim Hutchinson's release on Tuesday, March 25:**

On Monday, March 24 at around 3:00 a.m. deputies with the Anson County Sheriff's Office responded to 35 West Street in Polkton after a 911 call regarding a domestic situation. During the call a woman stated that Michael Rufus Roach who lived at the residence came into her room and threatened her with a gun and then took their six year old daughter that they have together and left in the victim's car. An Amber Alert was not issued because there was no legal documentation establishing custody. Deputies searched for Roach but were unable to located him, prompting them to issue a Be On The Lookout (BOLO) for both him and the vehicle.

Shortly after 8:00 a.m. a deputy attempted to stop Roach in a black Jeep Liberty. When he did not stop deputies pursued the vehicle through the northern part of Anson County. While traveling north on Little Creek Road Roach lost control of the vehicle around a curve and crashed into a ditch. Upon approaching the vehicle, deputies discovered Roach in the driver's seat with a self-inflicted gunshot wound and his daughter in the passenger seat, deceased from a gunshot wound.

Officers on the scene rendered aid until EMS arrived and transported Roach to Atrium Anson Hospital, where he was then flown to CMC Main in Charlotte where he remains in critical condition.

During the investigation we learned that Roach took the life of his six year old daughter Mianna Roach.

My heartfelt prayers go out to the families affected by this tragedy. I also want to express my gratitude to the first responders, the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation and the Anson County Sheriff's Office for their dedication and support.

For any questions I can be reached at the Polkton Police Department at 704-272-0130.

I would like to say that officers with all agencies done everything possible to end this incident peacefully and with no harm to anyone. All officers handled the situation properly and in accordance with policy procedures and with regard to the safety of the public and everyone else.

## Anson County Woman, Katisha Rashaud Roberts, Charged with Insurance Fraud

On Monday, March 24 North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey announced the arrest of Katisha Rashaud Roberts, 34, of 1264 Sandy Ridge Church Road in Morven. Roberts was charged with insurance fraud and attempting to obtain property by false pretense, both felonies.

Special agents with the Department of Insurance's Criminal Investigations Division charged Roberts with adding false statements to her auto accident report filed with Peak Property and Casualty Company. Roberts reported that unrepaid prior damage to the 2007 Honda Accord was not already present on the vehicle and reported that a passenger was injured who was not in the vehicle at the time of the accident.

According to the arrest warrant, the offense occurred on January 21.

Roberts was released on a \$4,000 secured bond and was set to appear in Anson County District Court on March 24.

Commissioner Causey encourages all North Carolinians to help keep insurance premiums low by reporting suspicious fraud. "Insurance fraud is not a victimless crime," Commissioner Causey said. "It hits all of us in the pocket through higher premiums."

If you suspect insurance fraud or other white-collar crimes, please report it. You may anonymously report fraud by calling the N.C. Department of Insurance Criminal Investigations Division at 919-807-6840 or toll free from anywhere in North Carolina at 888-680-7684.

Information is also available at [www.ncdoi.gov](http://www.ncdoi.gov).

## Huge Yard Sale on April 5

Faith-Based Center of Hope will have a huge yard sale on Saturday, April 5 in the parking lot across from Papa Joe's Pizzeria, 911 East Caswell Street (Plank Road Shopping Center) in Wadesboro beginning at 8:30 am. All proceeds will go to help our less fortunate brothers and sisters. Contributions and/or donations are appreciated.

For more information please contact Vancine Sturdivant, CEO at 704-294-0480, James Sturdivant at 704-294-8073, Linda Richardson at 704-465-0243, or Carol Leak at 704-441-5771.



Some of the award-winning Anson 4-H'ers are pictured above. They are, from left: Jahzaria Underwood, Andrew Martin, Zoe Martin, Ethan Dillon, Ethene Duncan, and Zaire Smith-Maxwell. Front middle: Kenleigh Cole

## 2025 4-H Achievement & 4-H Volunteer Leaders Appreciation Night

Anson County 4-H hosted its annual 4-H Achievement Night and Volunteer Leaders Appreciation celebration on March 5th to honor the accomplishments of 4-H members and the dedication of volunteers.

The 2025 project record winners were:  
• Zoe Martin (11-13) • Andrew Martin (14-18)  
• Jahzaria Underwood (16-18)  
Jahzaria also won a 2024 State Project Record for her "Citizenship & Civic Education" project.  
• County, district, and state presentation winners included Zoe and Andrew Martin, who earned cash awards for their achievements.  
• Christopher Harrington, Jr. and Ethan Dillon were recognized for their help with the 4-H Day Camp.

### 4-H Volunteer Leader Appreciation

Anson County 4-H recognized the valuable contributions of its volunteers, including Whitney Dunlap and Tracy Harrington for their summer camp support.

Long-term service awards were presented to volunteers like Ashley Cole (6 years), Leslie Smith (9 years), and Betty Garriss, who leads with 42 years of service!

The Eager Beavers and Busy Bees 4-H Clubs received charter seals for meeting all program requirements. The event also highlighted the outgoing and incoming 4-H Volunteer Leaders Association Officers, with Betty Garriss continuing as President. The evening was a successful celebration of hard work and community support.



Samuel Cole, Jr., Anson County 4-H Agent, with Betty Garriss, long-serving Anson County 4-H Volunteer Leaders President.

## Supreme Court of North Carolina Will Not Take Up Anson County Sheriff Dispute. Howell Remains Sheriff.

This is a release from Anson County Sheriff Scott Howell: On Friday, March 21, 2025, the Supreme Court of North Carolina issued an Order by a 6 to 1 vote upholding the decision of the Court of Appeals and confirming that Sheriff Scott Howell was properly appointed to serve as Sheriff of Anson County.

On September 21, 2022, Sheriff Landric Reid unexpectedly died while in office and his longtime close friend and then Chief Deputy Scott Howell was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to fulfill the remainder of Sheriff Reid's term. In 2022, Anson County Sheriff Landric Reid was on the ballot for reelection and was uncontested.

The Anson County Democratic Party wrongly believed that the Board of Commissioners was required to appoint the person recommended by the Democratic Party, as Sheriff Reid had been elected as the Democratic nominee pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 162-5.1 (b). However, this general statute did not include Anson County as it explained that the appointment for a vacancy in the Office of Sheriff was to be made only by the Board of Commissioners acting on their own discretion.

Anson County Commissioners discussed the sheriff's vacancy during a closed session at a meeting on Dec.1, 2022 but took no action. During the open session, a commissioner announced that the board would resolve the issue on Dec. 6, 2022, at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Commissioners voted 4-3 on Dec. 6 to appoint Howell to serve as Anson County Sheriff for the next four years.

Afterwards came several court rulings in favor of Anson County and Sheriff Scott Howell, Plaintiff Gerald Cannon appealed the case to the NC Court of Appeals.

The Court of Appeals ruling shows Cannon was appointed at an unlawful meeting where there was neither a true 'emergency' nor a quorum." Judge Flood cited during the December 5th meeting the absence of a quorum of members at the meeting site. "Plaintiff's appointment, therefore, passed with only two out of seven votes present - which is not a quorum. Without a quorum, Plaintiff was not lawfully appointed to the position of Anson County Sheriff, and the Board therefore had a vacancy in which to appoint Defendant Howell to fill," the majority opinion explained.

Sheriff Howell has proudly served the citizens of Anson County in the role of Sheriff since October 4th, 2022. "It's good to put this issue to rest", Howell said. "My staff and I have served the citizens of Anson County faithfully since this issue and court proceedings began. Our jobs are protecting our citizens. We were never distracted or lost sight of who is important here. I look forward to continuing to serve Anson County and our citizens with honesty, compassion, integrity and professionalism during the next two years and beyond.

## Anson County's January Unemployment Rate

**Anson County** Anson County's unemployment rate for January was 4.7 percent, up significantly from December's 3.7% rate.

Anson County's total labor force in January was 8,908, with 8,489 employed and 419 unemployed. In December the total labor force was 10,028, with 9,653 employed and 375 unemployed.

**Statewide** Statewide the unemployment rate for January was 4.0%. In December it was 3.4%.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) increased in 99 counties in January 2025 and remained unchanged in one. Hyde County had the highest unemployment rate at 8.3 percent while Camden County had the lowest at 3.0 percent.

All fifteen of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases. Among the metro areas, Asheville had the highest rate at 6.0 percent while Raleigh had the lowest at 3.2 percent. The not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 4.0 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in 69 counties, decreased in 18, and remained unchanged in 13. Nine metro areas experienced rate increases over the year, two decreased, and four remained unchanged.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in January by 10,772 to 5,077,982, while those unemployed increased by 31,684 to 209,884. Since January 2024, the number of workers employed statewide increased 25,816, while those unemployed increased 14,733.

## School Board Meeting is March 31

The Anson County Board of Education will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, March 31. The meeting will be held in the Anson County Schools' Administrative Board Room, located at 320 Camden Road in Wadesboro.

Closed Session will begin immediately after the opening of the meeting at 5:00 p.m. for the purpose of discussing matters related to personnel and property pursuant to NCGS 143.318.11(a)(6) & NCGS 143.318.11(a)(5). Open Session to the public will begin at 6:00 p.m.

If the public wishes to sign up for public comment, they can sign up in-person. A sign-up sheet will be available 30 minutes before the meeting begins for any individual or group to indicate their desire to address the board. Public comment will be held during the Open Session portion of the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting will be live-streamed on the Anson County Schools' YouTube channel for the public to view. To find the channel you can search YouTube for "Anson County Schools."

## Free Movie at the Library is Ladies in Lavendar

The Hampton B. Allen Library will be showing the movie *Ladies in Lavendar* Monday, March 31 at 10 a.m. in the Pritchett Room.

The movie stars Maggie Smith and Judi Dench. Everyone is invited to come enjoy the movie.

Any questions please call 704-694-5177.