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

Johnson & Johnson and Drug Distributors Commit to \$26 Billion Opioid Agreement

Anson County to receive over \$1 million in payments over the next 18 years

NC Attorney General Josh Stein has announced the final approval of the \$26 billion opioid agreement with the nation's three major pharmaceutical distributors – Cardinal, McKesson, and AmerisourceBergen – and Johnson & Johnson. Following successful state sign-on and subdivision sign-on periods, the defendants have committed to the deal and will start releasing funds to a national administrator on April 2, 2022. Money will start flowing to state and local governments in the second quarter of 2022.

Anson County will receive a total of \$1,173,353 in funds over a period of 18 years. In 2022 the county will receive \$144,219. After that, annual payments vary from \$51,780 to \$97,422. The payments to Anson County and other counties in North Carolina will help bring desperately needed relief to communities impacted by opioids. These funds will be used to support treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and other life-saving programs and services in communities throughout the state. North Carolina's Opioid and Substance Use Action Plan lays out concrete strategies to advance prevention, reduce harm, and connect people to the care that they need.

Attorney General Josh Stein's statement: "These companies made billions of dollars while millions of Americans got hooked on opioids. In North Carolina, we've already lost at least 20,000 people to this crisis, and countless families more have been devastated by loss and addiction. That's why I led a bi-partisan coalition of attorneys general from across the country to hold them accountable. We achieved the second largest state attorney general settlement in history – \$26 billion.

"As a result, North Carolina communities will begin to receive money this year to help people struggling with substance misuse. The treatment, recovery, prevention, and harm reduction services that will be available across the state will help people regain control over their lives and make North Carolina safer. I'm grateful to the counties and cities that have joined us in the years-long work to bring this money home to North Carolina. I pray that these funds will help us take a giant leap forward towards a better future for all North Carolinians."

The agreement marks the culmination of three years of negotiations to resolve more than 4,000 claims of state and local governments across the country. It is the second largest multistate agreement in U.S. history, only exceeded by the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement. State negotiations were led by Attorneys General Stein and Herbert Slatery (TN) and the attorneys general from California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

Fifty-two states and territories have signed on to the agreement as well as thousands of local governments across the country. In North Carolina, all 100 counties as well as 47 municipalities have signed on the agreement. As a result, North Carolina will receive its full share of \$750 million. Eighty-five percent of these funds will go directly to North Carolina's local communities to support treatment, recovery, harm reduction, and other strategies to address the opioid epidemic. The balance will go to the state for the same purposes.

"On behalf of North Carolina's county leaders who are working tirelessly each day to help their communities recover from the effects of the opioid crisis, the NCACC and all 100 counties are committed to directing these funds to efforts that will repair the damage caused by this epidemic with diligent and actionable stewardship," said Kevin Leonard, Executive Director of the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners.

"The finalization of this settlement and the resources that will result from it are crucial in addressing the damage done by the opioid crisis. Opioid addiction has negatively affected individuals, families and communities, and the work by Attorney General Stein, his staff and attorneys general nationwide to secure these resources will help communities across North Carolina see better outcomes for residents, as well as for the first responders and health care workers who have been on the front lines dealing with many of the consequences," said Rose Vaughn Williams, Executive Director of the N.C. League of Municipalities. "By supporting treatment and recovery, these dollars will assist individuals and families struggling with addiction, as well as make our communities safer."

North Carolina's opioid settlement dashboard: (ncopioidsettlement.org) offers tools, resources, and other information to local governments receiving opioid settlement funds and will serve as an information clearinghouse for reports on the use and impact of opioid settlement funds for the duration of the 18-year settlement.

In addition to the funds, Cardinal, McKesson, and AmerisourceBergen will:

- Establish a centralized independent clearinghouse to provide all three distributors and state regulators with aggregated data and analytics about where drugs are going and how often, eliminating blind spots in the current systems used by distributors.
- Use data-driven systems to detect suspicious opioid orders from customer pharmacies.
- Terminate customer pharmacies' ability to receive shipments, and report those companies to state regulators, when they show certain signs of diversion.
- Prohibit shipping of and report suspicious opioid orders.
- Prohibit sales staff from influencing decisions related to identifying suspicious opioid orders.
- Require senior corporate officials to engage in regular oversight of anti-diversion efforts.

Johnson & Johnson is required to:

- Stop selling opioids.
- Not fund or provide grants to third parties for promoting opioids.
- Not lobby on activities related to opioids.
- Share clinical trial data under the Yale University Open Data Access Project.

Additional information about the opioid settlements is available at: www.morepowerfulinc.org/opioid-settlements.

Career Day at Peachland-Polkton Elementary School



Peachland Polkton Elementary School hosted an annual Career Day on Friday, April 1. Community members visited to tell students about their careers, their job duties, the level of education or training required, and which school subjects are important in their line of work. Students learned from radiologists, engineers, farmers, realtors, National Guard service women, police officers, pharmacists, bankers, paramedics, vets, coffee baristas, doctors, college cheerleading coaches, bird trainers, newspaper reporters, nurses, local and state representatives, and our local animal shelter.

The guest speakers put a lot of time and effort into their presentations. They made the lessons fun, hands-on, and engaging to young students.

Peachland-Polkton Elementary School wants students to realize that the skills they are learning now will impact their futures. It is vital that we help our students realize their potential at a young age! Many of the guest speakers are former Peachland-Polkton Elementary School students or Anson County Schools alumni.

PPES sets high standards for their students and cheer them on as they reach their goals. These young kids are the future of our community. PPES always encourages them to strive for excellence. Special thanks to all of the guests who visited and made Career Day a success!

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Only 2 New Cases of Covid in Anson Since March 29

According to the latest information posted by the Anson County Health Department on Thursday, April 7, Anson County was at 6,564 total Covid-19 cases, with only two cases active. The total Covid-related deaths are 99. There have only been 15 new cases in Anson County since March 17. At that time 42 cases were active.

Covid Vaccines are available for everyone 5 years old and older, including walk-in clinics. (Children 5-11 by appointment only.) Vaccine boosters are available. They are free, and all you have to do is call the Health Department at 704-694-5188 for more information. Walk-in clinics are held on Thursdays, 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m. The Health Department is located at 110 West Ashe Street in Wadesboro.

Garden Plant Swap / Exchange is April 23

The annual plant exchange (swap) at the Marshville Museum and Cultural Center is scheduled for Saturday, April 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. It will be held in the garden beside the museum.

Since this is the first exchange since Covid stopped all gatherings, it is especially exciting to get ready now once again for the exchange by digging, potting-up and labeling so the plants will already be adjusted after being uprooted.

Think native plants for pollinators (especially bees), as they really need them. So, bring lots of plants and take lots of plants! There will be several Master Gardeners on hand to answer questions.

The Marshville Museum is located at 201 North Elm Street. It is open for visits Fridays and Saturdays 10 to 4 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 4 p.m. and other times by appointments and at special events. They are closed on all national holidays.

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Location/Site	Quarantined Students	Quarantined Employees	Positive Cases Students	Positive Cases Employees
Anson Early College High School	0	0	0	0
Anson High School	0	0	0	0
Anson Middle School	0	0	0	0
Ansonville Elementary	0	0	0	0
Lilesville Elementary	0	0	0	0
Morven Elementary	0	0	0	0
Peachland-Polkton Elementary	0	0	0	0
Wadesboro Elementary	1	0	0	0
Wadesboro Primary	0	0	0	0
District Office	N/A	0	N/A	0
Transportation	N/A	0	N/A	0
Maintenance	N/A	0	N/A	0
Child Nutrition/Cafeteria Employees	N/A	0	N/A	0
Total	1	0	0	0
Total Students + Employees	1		0	

*Student Enrollment as of 04/08/22	2,946	# of Employees	513
*Enrollment changes daily		% of Employees Positive	0.00%
% of Students Positive	0.00%	A link to the dashboard is on the Anson County Schools Facebook page.	

HOLLA! Community Development Center Providing Free Community Education

The HOLLA! Center in partnership with Sandhills Area NC Geriatric Adult Mental Health Specialty Team will provide classes to the community on the third Thursday of each month, from 1 to 2 p.m. Trainings are designed to bring awareness and information related to a number of topics, including mental health and dementia.

A class is scheduled for Thursday, April 21 at 1 p.m. on the subject of hoarding. The instructor will be Shelia Bryant-Raye, BS, QP, CDP. Door prizes and light refreshments will be provided. Registration at the door.

The HOLLA! Mary E. Little Community Center is located at 229 East Main Street in Morven.

The telephone number is 704-851-3144.

County Offices Closed this Friday, April 15

All Anson County offices will be closed this Friday, April 15 for Good Friday.

Law enforcement and emergency services will be operating.

The Anson County Cooperative Extension office will also be closed on Friday.

The Express is on the web at www.TheExpressNewspaper.com