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SPCC to Host Open House, FAFSA Help Event April 25

Event offers activities, resources, hands-on learning

South Piedmont Community College will open its doors to the community for an Open House and FAFSA assistance event on Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the L.L. Polk Campus.

The free event is designed for prospective students, families and community members to explore the college's programs and services - all while enjoying a lively, family-friendly atmosphere.

Visitors can expect a variety of interactive activities, including hands-on experiences, bounce houses and the chance to get an up-close look at emergency and service vehicles. (Because let's be honest - it's hard to resist checking out a big truck, no matter your age.)

In addition to the fun, the event will offer valuable resources for families, including on-site Pre-K screenings and opportunities to connect with local childcare providers to learn more about early childhood education options.

College representatives will also be available throughout the event to assist with FAFSA completion and answer questions about financial aid, enrollment and academic programs, helping students and families navigate what can sometimes feel like a maze of paperwork.

Complimentary refreshments will be provided, and community members of all ages are encouraged to attend.

To register or learn more, visit: events.spcc.edu/event/spcc.events.1585434.

Statewide Burn Ban Continues as Dry Conditions Fuel Wildfire Risk

A statewide burn ban remains in effect as North Carolina continues to experience dry conditions that have already led to hundreds of wildfires, with little relief expected over the next seven to 10 days.

Since the ban on open burning was enacted March 28, a total of 554 wildfires have burned more than 2,200 acres across the state. Officials say the ban and enforcement efforts will remain in place until conditions improve.

"Even with a burn ban in place we are continuing to see significant wildfire activity across the state because of conditions," said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. "Persistent drought, warmer temperatures, low humidity and no rainfall mean fires start quickly, spread quickly and burn intensely, making them harder to contain, control and extinguish. Our N.C. Forest Service staff will continue to monitor conditions and respond to wildfires across the state, but the public can help by following the burn ban and taking care with anything that can start a fire."

Of the reported wildfires since the ban began, only 4 have been attributed to lightning. Preliminary data shows at least 152 fires were human caused, while the remainder are still under investigation or listed as undetermined. Authorities have issued 150 citations for illegal burning during this time.

N.C. Forest Service personnel are continuing both wildfire response and enforcement efforts during the ban. Officials stress that limiting new fire starts is critical to ensuring resources remain available to respond to ongoing and future incidents.

Residents are urged to follow the burn ban and exercise caution with anything that could ignite a fire, including equipment, mowers, vehicles parked on dry grass and smoking materials. While some of these activities are not classified as open burning, they can still spark dangerous fires under current conditions.

The public is encouraged to stay informed by monitoring fire danger maps and statements, which provide updates on wildfire risk based on current and forecast weather conditions. To view current fire danger information, visit www.ncforestservice.gov/fire_control/fire_danger.htm.

For important information and updates from the N.C. Forest Service about burn bans, fire danger, wildfires and more, visit www.ncforestservice.gov and subscribe to receive email and text notifications.

Young Author to be Featured at Hampton B. Allen Library

6th grader to share writing journey and sign books

The Hampton B. Allen Library will host a special author event featuring young writer M'Layah Teyana Smith on Monday, April 20 at 10:30 a.m. in the library's Pritchett Room.

M'Layah, a sixth-grade student, is the author of "Tales of the Adventurous Girl," a book that showcases her creativity and imagination at an early age - and might just inspire a few future authors in the audience.

The event will include an author talk and book signing, giving attendees the opportunity to hear firsthand about M'Layah's writing journey, how her story came together and what inspired her along the way.

Community members are invited to meet M'Layah, learn about her adventure into authorship and purchase a copy of her book.

Library officials encourage the public to attend and support this young local author as she shares her work and passion for storytelling.

Bowman Class of 1971 to Gather for Reunion Planning Meeting

Members of the Bowman Senior High School Class of 1971 will gather for a reunion planning meeting on Saturday, April 25, at 12 noon at Hilltop Restaurant in Monroe.

The meeting will serve as a chance for classmates to reconnect, catch up and begin making plans for their upcoming reunion - with just enough time to remember a few names, faces and possibly where everyone sat in homeroom.

Details will be shared for the official reunion, scheduled for September 25 through September 27, 2026, at the Sheraton Greensboro Hotel Four Seasons in Greensboro.

Organizers encourage all classmates to attend the April meeting, whether they've stayed closely connected over the years or it's been a while since the last roll call, because reunions, like good friendships, only get better with time.



since I was 18 years old," Webb said. "I think everyone that is able should be giving too."

Volunteer Michelle Sarno continues to play a key role in organizing the quarterly drives, ensuring that opportunities to donate remain available throughout the year. Plans are already underway for the next blood drive, scheduled for August.

Organizers say the success of the event is a reflection of the strong community spirit in Burnsville - where neighbors consistently step up to help neighbors, and maybe roll up a sleeve or two along the way.

Community Comes Together for Successful Red Cross Blood Drive

Volunteers help save lives...one donation at a time

The Burnsville community once again showed up in a big way for its quarterly Red Cross Blood Drive, proving that even in a small community, the impact can be anything but small.

Held at the Burnsville Fire & Rescue Department in partnership with Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center, the event drew strong support from local donors and volunteers committed to helping others. Organizers expressed their appreciation to everyone who participated, noting that the effort would not be possible without the continued backing of the community.

Among those helping lead the charge were Red Cross representative Larry Bernstein and community donor Gail Webb (pictured at left), who worked together during the event with a shared goal - saving lives.

Webb, a longtime donor, offered both encouragement and perspective. "I am 74 years old and have been a blood donor

Anson County Names New Veteran Services Officer

Michael Curlee brings decades of service and experience to role

Anson County has a new face ready to serve those who have served, as Michael Curlee has been announced as the county's new Veteran Services Officer.

Curlee brings a strong background to the position, having served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve and later retiring from the State of North Carolina after 25 years of service. Along the way, he built experience in social work and special education - skills that should come in handy when helping veterans navigate everything from benefits paperwork to the occasional government form that seems to require a Ph.D. to complete.

He currently resides in Stanly County with his family and is now stepping into a role focused on assisting veterans across Anson County with accessing the services and support they've earned.

Local officials are encouraging the community to extend a warm welcome as Curlee settles into the position.

The Veterans Service Office is located in the Anson County Government Annex Building at 575 U.S. 52 in Wadesboro. Curlee can be reached by phone at 704-465-0086.



Michael Curlee

Bowman Class of 1974 Gathering is Saturday

Members of the Bowman High School Class of 1974 are invited to circle this Saturday, April 18 on their calendar and prepare for an evening of laughter, memories and the occasional "you haven't changed a bit" (even if everyone knows better). Classmates - along with a guest - will gather beginning at 4:00 p.m. at Blue Bay Fish Camp in Albemarle for a relaxed get-together.

The event is Dutch treat, so everyone can order their favorite seafood or country cooking while catching up and swapping stories...some of which may have improved slightly over the years.

Class members can also stay connected through the Facebook page, "Bowman High School c/o 1974," for updates and messages.

Blue Bay Fish Camp is located at 1901 East Main Street in Albemarle.

Early Release Friday, Big Night Ahead for Anson Students

Short school day gives way to long-awaited prom evening

Anson County middle and high school students will get a bit of a head start on their weekend this Friday, April 17, as schools will dismiss early at 1:00 p.m. - just enough time to go home, take a deep breath and begin the transformation from student to prom superstar.

The early release applies to middle and high schools only, but it's safe to assume plenty of excitement will be in the air across the district as the day doubles as prom day for high school students.

With the District High School Prom also scheduled for Friday evening, students will be trading backpacks for bow ties, hoodies for heels and classroom conversations for "What time are we leaving?" and "Did you remember the corsage?"

Parents, meanwhile, will be adjusting to a slightly earlier pickup time, followed by an evening of photo sessions, last-minute outfit adjustments and the annual reminder that, yes, their child suddenly looks much older than they did that morning.

School officials say the early dismissal is designed to give students adequate time to prepare for the evening's festivities - because getting ready for prom is, in fact, a full-day event disguised as a school day.

So whether it's curling irons heating up, ties being tied (and re-tied), or dinner reservations being double-checked, Friday promises to be a memorable day from start to finish.

Kindergarten Transition Meeting Set for April 16

Families of rising kindergarten students are invited to attend an upcoming Kindergarten Transition Meeting designed to help prepare children and parents for the 2026-2027 school year in Anson County Schools.

The event will take place on Thursday, April 16, at 6:00 p.m. in the gymnasium at Wadesboro Elementary School. The meeting is open to all families with children who will be entering kindergarten in the upcoming school year.

Organizers say the evening will provide a valuable opportunity for parents and students to become familiar with the school environment and expectations before the first day of class. Attendees will have the chance to meet kindergarten teachers, ask questions, and learn more about what students can expect as they begin their educational journey.

In addition to helpful information, the event will include free gift bags for rising kindergarteners and a complimentary hot dog meal for all who attend. Spanish-language assistance will also be available to ensure all families can fully participate.

The Kindergarten Transition Meeting is part of a broader effort to support families and ensure students start school with confidence, preparation, and excitement.

For more information, families may contact the Partnership for Children at 704-694-4036.

SPCC Foundation Signature Event is April 24

The South Piedmont Community College Foundation has announced its inaugural Signature Event, set for Friday, April 24, 2026, from 6:00 until 10:00 p.m. at the Rolling Hill Venue in Monroe. The evening promises a blend of celebration, community spirit, and philanthropy in support of students across the region.

This year's theme, A Night of Roaring Twenties Elegance, will transport guests back to the glamour and excitement of the 1920s. Attendees are invited to enjoy an evening inspired by the style and energy of the era while connecting with community leaders, supporters, faculty and staff, and friends of the College.

Proceeds from the event will directly benefit the South Piedmont Community College Foundation, helping fund student scholarships, academic programs, and initiatives that expand educational opportunities throughout Anson and Union counties.

Tickets for The Signature Event are available online, and sponsorship opportunities are also currently available for businesses and individuals interested in supporting the event while gaining visibility among community partners and college supporters.

For sponsorship information or additional event details, contact Ashley Furr at afurr@spcc.edu or call 704-290-5089.

Day of Hope Event Set for April 18 at Anson High School

The community is invited to attend a Day of Hope on April 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Anson High School football field.

The free event, hosted by the Hope for Today Celebration, the churches of Anson County and Kingdom Citizens Outreach Ministry, will offer a day filled with encouragement, worship and support for individuals and families.

Attendees can receive a variety of free items and services, including a hot meal, groceries, cleaning supplies, shoes, health screenings and Bibles. The event will also feature a worship service along with activities for children such as games, face painting and a bounce house. Emergency vehicles including a fire truck, police car and ambulance will also be on site.

Organizers encourage everyone to attend and bring a friend to enjoy the day and renew a sense of hope. All giveaways will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

School Board Budget Meeting

The Anson County Board of Education has a budget development workshop on Monday, April 20 at 3:30 p.m.

The meeting will take place in the Anson County Schools Administrative Board Room, located at 320 Camden Road in Wadesboro.

While budget workshops may not come with popcorn or halftime entertainment, they are where many of the important financial decisions begin to take shape for the upcoming school year. Board members will review numbers, discuss priorities and work toward a plan that keeps the district running smoothly.

As always, the public is welcome to attend and observe the process as the board begins mapping out the financial blueprint for Anson County Schools.