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

Anson Crisis Ministries Needs Food. Can You Help?

Donations as small as a few cans of food help... it all adds up to fewer hungry families

Anson Crisis Ministry, located at 117 North Rutherford Street in Wadesboro, needs your help. They desperately need food items and even monetary donations to help make ends meet for the more than 300 local families who come for food assistance each week.

Many families served by the Crisis Ministries include small children who don't understand why they are hungry but don't have anything to eat - as well as elderly citizens who are in need and often hungry during what should be their golden years.

Families receiving food assistance are asked to limit their visits to two times per month. But, if an extra need arises, the Crisis Ministries will provide for an additional visit. Margot Barnes, the Crisis Ministries Director said, "We don't want anyone to be hungry."

With the rising cost of living, more and more people need assistance - but food pantries are struggling due to recent enormous budget cuts, and are left to figure out how to make their supply meet their demand.

Additionally, community members who would typically make donations are also left with higher costs of living, and thus tend to make fewer contributions than they normally would. It's a vicious cycle and there's no end in sight.

If you can help, please take your donations to Anson Crisis Ministry between 8:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Drive to the back of the building and pull over to the left. Any amount of non-perishable food helps tremendously - 3 or 4 cans...or a whole pickup load! A volunteer will come assist you.

If you have questions call 704-694-2445. And thank you in advance for helping to fight hunger.

Man Charged Following Intentional Vehicle Attack

Franklin Oxner is facing multiple felony charges after authorities say he intentionally struck a woman with a vehicle Tuesday morning before fleeing the scene on foot.



Franklin Oxner

According to the Polkton Police Department, officers were dispatched at approximately 6:37 a.m. on Tuesday, May 12 to Martin Street in reference to a collision involving injuries. When officers arrived, they found two damaged vehicles in a yard and a female victim suffering from what appeared to be serious injuries. Witnesses told officers the driver fled the area on foot toward Rosa Lane.

Polkton Police Chief Tim Hutchinson requested assistance from the Anson County Sheriff's Office, including K9 unit K9 Landi. Authorities said a coordinated effort involving law enforcement personnel, K9 Landi and the Polkton Police Department drone helped lead officers to the suspect, who was taken into custody. Investigators later determined the incident was an intentional attack involving the driver and the victim.

As a precaution during the search, South Piedmont Community College and Peachland-Polkton Elementary School were placed on lockdown.

The identity of the victim has not been released. Franklin Oxner has been charged with attempted murder, hit and run with injuries, assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury, driving while license revoked, possession of a stolen vehicle, careless and reckless driving and failure to maintain lane control.

Authorities also stated Oxner faces additional charges from the Monroe Police Department for larceny of a vehicle allegedly used during the incident.

Chief Hutchinson thanked the various emergency responders and agencies involved in the investigation and credited cooperation between law enforcement agencies for helping bring the situation to a safe conclusion.

Award-Winning Author Daija Rivers to Visit Hampton B. Allen Library

Award-winning children's author Daija Rivers will be the featured guest at Hampton B. Allen Library on Monday, May 18, at 10:30 a.m.

The program will be held in the library's Pritchett Room and is open to the public.

Rivers, a self-published author who has written several children's books, will discuss her latest book, "Invisible Fruits," and share insights about her writing journey and experiences as an independent author.

Library officials encourage community members to attend, bring a friend and enjoy the opportunity to meet Rivers and learn more about the creative process behind her books.

Copies of her books will also be available for purchase during the event.

The program offers readers and aspiring writers a chance to hear firsthand how determination, imagination and storytelling can grow into a successful publishing career - proof that sometimes the best stories begin with a simple idea and a willingness to keep writing even after the coffee gets cold.

NCWorks Veterans Portal

Home to nearly 800,000 veterans and several major military installations, North Carolina has a distinguished history in serving the U.S. military veterans, and their families. The NCWorks Veterans Portal is an online website for veterans. This collection of resources provides services for veterans, transitioning service members, and eligible spouses to obtain employment.

The Veterans Portal is at: veterans.ncworks.gov/vosnet.



Lula Jackson, Anson County Department of Social Services Director, is pictured above left with Anson Commissioner Priscilla Little.

Anson DSS Director Lula Jackson Receives Statewide Honor

Anson County Department of Social Services Director Lula Jackson has been named the 2026 Director of the Year by the North Carolina Association of County Directors of Social Services during the organization's annual meeting in Asheville.

According to Anson County Government, this marks the first time an Anson County DSS director has received the statewide recognition.

Jackson's career with Anson County DSS spans more than 35 years and reflects what county officials described as a remarkable example of dedication, leadership and public service.

After graduating from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Jackson began her career with Anson County DSS as a front desk receptionist before working her way through the department over the years. She has served as DSS director since 2010.

County officials said Jackson has spent her career advocating for children, families, older adults and the vulnerable residents throughout Anson County while helping strengthen the department's mission of providing compassionate and effective human services.

In recognition of her achievement and decades of service, the Anson County Board of Commissioners recently presented Jackson with a plaque honoring her accomplishments and commitment to the citizens of Anson County.

Officials noted that Jackson's recognition reflects not only her professional accomplishments, but also the lasting impact she has made on countless individuals and families across the community.

Going from front desk receptionist to statewide Director of the Year is the kind of career path that reminds people hard work still matters - and probably also means Jackson has seen just about everything a DSS office can possibly throw at a person over the last three and a half decades.

North Carolina Unemployment Rate Falls To 3.7 Percent In March

North Carolina's unemployment rate dipped slightly in March, offering another sign that the state's job market continues to show steady strength - even if many workers still feel like their paycheck disappears faster than a plate of barbecue at a church fundraiser.

According to newly released figures, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 3.7% in March, down 0.1 percentage point from February's revised rate. The national unemployment rate also declined slightly, falling to 4.3%. Compared to one year ago, North Carolina's unemployment rate has improved by 0.1 percentage point.

State officials reported that the number of employed people in North Carolina decreased by 3,097 during March to 5,107,523, though employment remains up by 18,671 compared to the same period last year. The number of unemployed North Carolinians decreased by 3,946 over the month to 197,113 and fell by 4,109 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment increased by 9,400 jobs in March to 5,078,400. Industries posting the largest gains included Trade, Transportation and Utilities, which added 4,600 jobs, followed by Manufacturing with 2,200 jobs and Leisure and Hospitality Services with 1,400 jobs.

Construction added 800 jobs, Financial Activities gained 700 and Private Education and Health Services added 200 jobs during the month.

Industries experiencing small declines included Government, Information, Mining and Logging and Other Services.

Employment in Professional and Business Services remained unchanged.

Over the past year, North Carolina added 44,500 Total Nonfarm jobs. Private Education and Health Services led yearly gains with 21,000 additional jobs, followed by Construction with 11,300 and Leisure and Hospitality Services with 8,200.

Manufacturing experienced the largest annual decline, losing 9,800 jobs statewide.

Officials noted that October 2025 employment data remains unavailable because of a lapse in appropriations.

Economists say North Carolina's labor market continues to show resilience overall, although many businesses are still navigating higher operating costs, workforce shortages and the increasingly difficult challenge of finding employees willing to answer phones, emails and occasionally both on the same day.

Statewide Burn Ban Fully Lifted Following Rainfall

After weeks of dry conditions, smoky warnings and nervous looks at backyard brush piles, North Carolina's statewide burn ban has officially been lifted for all counties.

The N.C. Forest Service announced that the remaining burn restrictions for 19 counties, including Anson County, were lifted effective 8 a.m. Friday, May 8, following recent rainfall that improved fire conditions across the region.

The burn ban had been in place since March 28 because of hazardous wildfire conditions. Restrictions for 81 counties were lifted earlier this month, while counties in the western Piedmont, Triad and foothills remained under the ban until additional rain arrived this week.

"With the additional precipitation received this week, fire danger has improved for the western Piedmont, Triad and foothills," Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler said.

Troxler cautioned, however, that drought conditions still exist in many areas and residents should continue using caution when burning outdoors.

"Responsible, safe burning is critical all the time but especially during peak wildfire season," Troxler said. "Stay with your fire until it is completely out and cold to the touch."

As of Friday morning, burn permits once again became available statewide. Officials reminded residents that all permits issued before the March 28 ban were canceled, meaning anyone planning to burn must obtain a new valid permit.

The lifting of the state burn ban does not apply to fires started within 100 feet of an occupied dwelling. Local fire marshals still have authority to issue or maintain restrictions within those areas.

Residents can obtain burn permits online at apps.ncagr.gov/burnpermits or through authorized permitting agents.

Officials recommend checking fire danger conditions before burning and keeping water, a shovel, rake and a phone nearby at all times. In other words: if your burn pile starts behaving like a dragon, it may be time to call for help.

For more information, residents may contact their local county ranger or visit www.ncforestservice.gov/contacts.

To check fire danger conditions, visit climate.ncsu.edu/fire.

Additional wildfire prevention information is available at www.preventwildfireinc.org.

HOLLA! 5K and Literary Escape Planned for this Saturday

Running shoes, dancing boots and good books will all share the spotlight when HOLLA! Community Development Corporation hosts its HOLLA! 5K and Literary Escape on Saturday, May 16, at the HOLLA! Center in Morven. The annual HOLLA! 5K serves as one of the organization's primary fundraisers and invites participants of all ages to walk, run or even dance their way through a day focused on health, literacy and community fellowship.

Onsite registration begins at 8:00 a.m., with opening ceremonies scheduled for 9:00 a.m. Onsite registration for the 5K is \$20.

This year's event will begin with music from the Gatewood Brothers, who organizers say will help kick off the morning with energy and inspiration.

Adding an extra dose of rhythm to this year's activities, Trail Ride Dance Lessons will be taught by Lady V of Charlotte. The dance sessions are sponsored by Morven native Beverly Cason and are expected to provide plenty of movement, laughs and possibly a few participants discovering muscles they forgot they had.

In addition to the fitness activities, the event will also feature Literary Escape, a celebration centered on reading, storytelling and creative learning.

Local authors and storyteller Tyris Jones will be featured as part of the literacy-focused portion of the event.

HOLLA! Community Development Corporation has long provided mentoring, tutoring, performing arts, culinary arts, workforce development and cultural programs designed to help youth and families across Anson County. Organizers say the May 16 event reflects the organization's belief that literacy, education and positive community involvement can change lives.

"Whether you choose to walk, run, dance or simply show up in support, your presence helps HOLLA! continue doing the work of building stronger children, stronger families and a stronger community," said Leon Gatewood, founder and CEO of HOLLA! CDC.

Community members, families, alumni and supporters are encouraged to attend and participate.

For more information, contact the HOLLA! Center at 704-851-3144.

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