

## Scholarship Opportunity for North Carolina Students!

North Carolina students from households making \$80,000 or less could have their tuition and fees fully covered thanks to the Next NC Scholarship! The scholarship is for community colleges and public universities in North Carolina. This is money that doesn't have to be repaid!

Applying is very simple, you just submit your FAFSA form... and that's it! If you're eligible, you will receive the Next NC Scholarship. There are no additional forms to fill out. The scholarship could fully cover the cost to attend South Piedmont Community College, for example.

Check out the information video on YouTube to learn more - just search for "NextNCScholarship."

Visit [nextncscholarship.org](http://nextncscholarship.org).

## North Carolina Celebrates National Fishing and Boating Week

Fishing poles, kayaks and plenty of worms will soon be making appearances across North Carolina as the state celebrates National Fishing and Boating Week during the first week of June.

The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and its partners will host fishing events statewide aimed at encouraging families and children to get outdoors, enjoy the water and maybe finally land "the big one" that always seems to get away. One of the largest events will be the Fintastic Fishing Festival on Saturday, June 13, at the Pechmann Fishing Education Center in Fayetteville.

Families with children ages 15 and under are invited to attend the free event, which will feature a full day of fishing activities, educational exhibits and outdoor fun.

Festival highlights will include live fishing demonstrations, casting contests, kayaking, fly-fishing and fly-tying, boating simulators, fishing knot tutorials and catch-and-release fishing opportunities for all ages.

Children attending the event will also be entered for a chance to win a Unified Sportsman License provided by the North Carolina Wildlife Federation.

Participants are encouraged to bring their own medium-action fishing gear and natural bait, although equipment and worms will be available for loan at the Pechmann Center. Food trucks will also be on-site during the event.

Organizers say the festival is designed not only to introduce young people to fishing, but also to teach the importance of conservation and protecting North Carolina's fisheries for future generations.

**Other National Fishing and Boating Week events scheduled across the state include** (email or sites for info):

- May 30 — Uwharrie Kids Fishing Day, New London [noah.clements@usda.gov](mailto:noah.clements@usda.gov)
- May 30 — Family Fishing Day, Guilford [jgladst@guilfordcountync.gov](mailto:jgladst@guilfordcountync.gov)
- May 30 — Kids Fishing Day at Carolina Hemlocks, Burnsville [Brandon.yearack@usda.gov](mailto:Brandon.yearack@usda.gov)
- June 6 — Fish for Fun, Town of Granite Quarry [granitequarrync.gov/community-events/events/fish-for-fun](http://granitequarrync.gov/community-events/events/fish-for-fun)
- June 6 — Fishing Derby, Onslow County Parks & Recreation and City of Jacksonville [onslowcountync.gov/2328/Youth-Fishing-Derby](http://onslowcountync.gov/2328/Youth-Fishing-Derby)
- June 6 — Youth Fishing Day, Camp Lejeune [emily.gaydos@usmc.mil](mailto:emily.gaydos@usmc.mil)
- June 6 — Lake Royale Kids Fishing Derby, Louisburg [lakeroyalefishingclub@gmail.com](mailto:lakeroyalefishingclub@gmail.com)
- June 6 — Neuseway Nature Park Kids Fishing Day, Kinston [jonathan.massey@kinstonnc.gov](mailto:jonathan.massey@kinstonnc.gov)
- June 13 — Kids Freshwater Fishing Day, Town of Surf City [surfcitync.gov/Calendar](http://surfcitync.gov/Calendar)

Officials say events like these help families reconnect with nature, enjoy time together and occasionally discover that fish have a remarkable ability to stop biting the exact moment someone says, "Watch this."

For more information about fishing events and programs across the state, visit [ncwildlife.org](http://ncwildlife.org).

## Fire Truck Festival Returns June 13 To N.C. Transportation Museum

Sirens, shiny fire trucks and plenty of family fun will roll into Spencer on Saturday, June 13 as the annual Fire Truck Festival returns to the North Carolina Transportation Museum.

The popular event, held from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., is the museum's largest single-day event of the year and draws fire departments and emergency vehicles from across the region. Families can explore antique and modern fire trucks, meet firefighters and enjoy a full day of activities centered around fire safety, transportation history and hands-on fun.

The museum itself has a long connection to firefighting. The site once served as Southern Railway's historic Spencer Shops, where steam locomotives were maintained and repaired. In the 1920s, the Spencer Shops Fire Department was created to protect the massive rail facility and nearby communities from fires, using teams equipped with thousands of feet of fire hose.

Today's festival celebrates that history while offering plenty of modern excitement.

"This is one of our favorite events, largely because the fire departments are so welcoming and willing to talk with families about the important jobs they do," said Kelly Alexander, executive director of the museum.

Visitors can expect a packed schedule featuring fire safety demonstrations, inflatable games, a fire safety house, children's activities, operating model train displays and a trackless train for kids. A popular children's firefighter costume contest will also return.

Special guests and displays will include the N.C. Forestry Service, Norfolk Southern's Operation Awareness and Response safety train and the Charlotte Fire Department Safety Education Team. Demonstrations of the "Jaws of Life" rescue equipment are also planned throughout the day.

Train rides will depart throughout the day at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Combination tickets that include festival admission and train rides are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors and military members and \$16 for children ages 3-12. Children under 3 and museum members are admitted free. Festival-only admission without a train ride is available for half the cost of the combination tickets.

Regular museum exhibits are included with admission, and organizers strongly encourage visitors to purchase tickets in advance.

The festival concludes with the always-popular fire truck parade beginning at 2:30 p.m.

For tickets, schedules and additional information call the museum at 704-636-2889 or visit [www.nctransportationmuseum.org/fire-truck-festival](http://www.nctransportationmuseum.org/fire-truck-festival).

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## Eastview Cemetery Welcomes Donations, Volunteers

Where the quiet residents are depending on the noisy volunteers

Eastview Cemetery on Old Lilesville Road in Wadesboro is looking better these days - thanks to some new energy, fresh paint, and a few good-hearted volunteers who aren't afraid of a little ghostly company. Trustee Ken Caulder reports that entrances, walls, and handrails have all been pressure washed and painted, fallen trees cleared, and lawn care improved under groundskeeper Adam Pope, who's keeping things tidy on a regular schedule.

Trustees are now eyeing other projects and long-needed repairs to the cemetery's roads. To make it all happen, they're asking for donations from anyone with family buried there (or just a soft spot for historic Wadesboro landmarks).

"Every bit helps," says Caulder, who notes that even the smallest contribution adds up to big improvements. Donations can be sent to Eastview Cemetery Fund, P.O. Box 274, Wadesboro, NC 28170, or by contacting Leavitt Funeral Home at 704-694-2524.

So if you want to support a local landmark that's truly standing the test of time, Eastview Cemetery would be eternally grateful.

## DriveNC Website Getting Major Upgrade

It might finally know more about traffic than your Uncle Larry

Drivers across North Carolina will soon notice some major changes to NC Department of Transportation's popular traveler information website, [DriveNC.gov](http://DriveNC.gov).

Beginning May 27, the longtime road information hub will receive a major overhaul featuring a redesigned map, new tools and a more mobile-friendly experience - because apparently even highway websites eventually need a glow-up.

The web address itself will remain the same, but the software powering the system is being completely replaced. NCDOT officials say the upgraded platform will offer travelers faster, easier access to road conditions, traffic disruptions and live highway information across the state. New features will include the ability to sign up for customized email alerts about traffic disruptions on selected routes or areas, view messages currently displayed on overhead highway signs and watch live feeds from more than 1,100 traffic cameras statewide.

That means drivers can now officially watch traffic jams in real time instead of just staring in them.

For the first time, travelers will also be able to download a free "DriveNC" app for iPhone and Android devices, allowing road updates to travel right along in everyone's pocket - right beside weather apps people ignore until the storm actually arrives.

Visitors to the updated site can click a new "New Features" section at the top of the page for tutorials explaining how the revamped system works.

The original DriveNC system was created following Hurricane Floyd in 1999, when severe flooding across eastern North Carolina highlighted the need for better statewide road information. "For more than 25 years, our current system has reliably served travelers across North Carolina," said Kelly Wells, traveler information engineer for the department's Traffic Systems Operations Unit. "This new platform will provide even greater capabilities to support our travelers and our partners."

In 2025 alone, more than 34,000 traffic incidents were logged into the system, including crashes, lane closures, road work and storm-related problems.

Nearly 1.4 million people used DriveNC.gov last year, generating about 2.2 million visits - many of them likely checking to see whether traffic was "backed up a little" or "bring snacks and prepare emotionally."

NCDOT officials noted that automatic alerts shared with navigation services such as Apple Maps, Google Maps and Waze will continue under the upgraded system.

The updated website will remain free for all users, with customized alerts available for those who create an account and subscribe to notifications.

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