

THE EXPRESS

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

Start of Hurricane Season, North Carolinians Urged to Stay Safe

Governor Josh Stein, along with Director of Emergency Management Will Ray, Attorney General Jeff Jackson, First Sergeant Chris Knox of the North Carolina Highway Patrol, and Colonel Patrick Henderson of the North Carolina Army National Guard held a briefing to provide updates and guidance at the start of hurricane season. Governor Stein urged North Carolinians to have a plan in place in case of emergency and shared resources to help people prepare and stay safe.

“As our state braces for hurricane season, I encourage North Carolinians be aware of emergency management warnings and resources so that they have a plan to stay safe in case of an emergency,” said Governor Josh Stein. “Emergency Management continues to prepare amidst uncertainty on the federal level – we must stay the course and do everything in our power to keep North Carolinians safe no matter what happens in Washington, DC.”

“Hurricane season has begun and there are steps to be taken to protect yourself, your family, and your property if a hurricane or tropical weather does strike,” said North Carolina Director of Emergency Management Will Ray. “Remember to put together an emergency kit, have multiple avenues from which you can receive emergency announcements, and take the steps needed to protect your home.”

The State Emergency Response Team has begun preparations for the 2025 hurricane season by reviewing lessons learned from previous storms as well as policies and procedures and exercising key processes to ensure all resources are available to local communities should a storm impact the state. The focus of the State Emergency Response Team is to support local emergency management and first responders, but it is imperative that all North Carolinians take the time to prepare their household for tropical weather. Preparedness builds resilience.

Last month Governor Stein published an op-ed about smart ways to reform FEMA in USA Today as North Carolina braces for hurricane season. The Governor outlines his recommendations to reform FEMA, including focusing on permanently rebuilding homes and businesses, implementing a common application for survivors to apply for aid, and moving away from reimbursement programs. There is much room for improvement in FEMA, but abolishing FEMA exacerbates the problem as we enter another hurricane season.

Make sure your family is prepared before disaster strikes. Below are some things you can do immediately to get prepared:

- Put together an emergency kit, including non-perishable food and water (1 gallon per person per day) for 3 to 7 days, a battery-powered or hand crank radio or a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio with extra batteries, and prescriptions and over the counter medication.
 - Be aware of any unique needs for babies, elderly, or disabled members of your household, as well as pets.
 - Have multiple ways to receive severe weather warnings such as the weather alert app on your phone, a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio, or local TV news.
 - Build an emergency plan in case you and your family need to evacuate, including a plan for communication. Have printed copies of family members’ phone numbers, social media handles, email addresses, and important medical information in case mobile devices die. Plan where you will meet if you are separated from your family and have copies of important papers such as birth and adoption certificates, driver’s licenses, or military ID’s.
 - Protect your home by preparing a full list of personal items to help with insurance settlements or tax deductions.
 - Be sure you know how to shut off your utilities safely. Water, electricity and gas are key services that can also cause special problems during an emergency. Do NOT try to turn the gas back on yourself. Always call a trained expert.
- Get involved in your community’s preparedness activities:**
- Learn about the emergency plans for your children’s schools, your workplace, and your neighborhood.
 - Participate in community preparedness exercises & drills.
 - Volunteer with a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to learn about disaster preparedness and receive training in basic disaster response skills.
 - Contact the NC Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster for more ways to help.

Visit readync.gov for more tips on how you can be prepared for hurricane season.

Free Homebuyer Class on June 28

Johnson Chapel Church is sponsoring a homebuyer class on Saturday, June 28, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. The class is free, with no registration fee. All are invited to come and be informed.

The class is hosted by realtor Jason Gaddy and loan officer April Palacios.

Johnson Chapel Church is located at 501 Prescott Street in Wadesboro.

Anson Animal Shelter Needs Volunteers - Would You Like to Help?

Donations are gratefully accepted too!

The Anson County Animal Shelter depends on the help of volunteers to ensure that animal residents receive love and care. More volunteers will also help relieve the workload on staff which can result in more time for resident animals to be adopted before they are euthanized (put to sleep). Please consider volunteering.

For more information on helping or making a donation, call 704-994-2738.

Do you want to adopt a pet?

A rescue from Animal Shelter can bring lots of happiness and love into any home...and you will make the animal happy too! It’s a win-win.

Visit the Facebook page: “ACAS Advocates” to see a list of all the dogs at the Anson Animal Shelter. It features details about each dog, bios and photos and videos. There are also many wonderful kittens and cats who would love to have a home.

The Animal Shelter is located at 7257 US Highway 74 in Polkton, at the entrance to the Field of Dreams.

And remember, older animals need a home and love too!



Pictured above, in this undated photograph, Mr. George Ross (left) is honored at the occasion of his retirement as Postmaster at the Wadesboro Post Office. Pictured with Mr. Ross are, from left, J. B. Watson, Jr., Hunk Edwards, Wells Ross and Earl Gilmore.

Dr. Brian C. Ratliff to Serve Another Term as Interim Superintendent of Anson County Schools

The Anson County Board of Education is pleased to announce that Dr. Brian C. Ratliff will serve another term as Interim Superintendent of Anson County Schools, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

Throughout his tenure, Dr. Ratliff has provided steady leadership, clear communication, and a student-centered approach that has earned the respect of the school community. His continued service reflects the Board’s confidence in his ability to lead with professionalism, purpose, and care.

Dr. Ratliff is widely recognized as a leader who prioritizes relationships. He believes that trust, collaboration, and mutual respect are the foundation of a strong and thriving school community. By fostering meaningful connections with students, staff, and families, he creates a culture where every individual feels seen, heard, and valued.

As Interim Superintendent, Dr. Ratliff is clear about who he serves - the nearly 3,000 students of Anson County Schools. Every decision he makes is grounded in what is best for them, with a heart for helping each student recognize their potential and confidently shine their light.

With decades of experience in public education, including roles as principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent, Dr. Ratliff brings seasoned leadership and a deep understanding of what it takes to move a school system forward. His steady presence and strong vision continue to guide Anson County Schools toward meaningful progress.

The Anson County Board of Education looks forward to the year ahead under Dr. Ratliff’s leadership as the district works to support students, empower educators, and strengthen community partnerships in pursuit of excellence for all.



Dr. Brian Ratliff

South Piedmont Community College’s Welding Labs Earn Prestigious National Accreditation

South Piedmont Community College’s Tyson Family Center for Technology welding lab is now an accredited American Welding Society testing facility. Only four other community colleges in North Carolina carry the AWS accreditation.

“This accreditation is a signal of quality for our welding students and to aspiring welders throughout our service area and beyond. We’ve done the work, we’ve met the American Welding Society’s rigorous standards, and now, not only are we delivering the very highest quality welding education, we’re also able to test welders from throughout our region. If you are interested in a welding career, your first stop should be South Piedmont Community College,” said Vice President of Business & Workforce Solutions Chris Rivera.

To earn the accreditation, South Piedmont had to meet specific requirements for personnel, equipment, and procedures. Having met those requirements, South Piedmont is now able to test and qualify welders for the American Welding Society’s Certified Welder certification.

“The Certified Welder certification opens up a lot of doors,” said Director of Applied Technical Programs Aaron Wulk, who oversaw South Piedmont’s accreditation effort. “When you earn your CW, it validates that you are capable of meeting the standards of the welding profession, that you can make a good weld and meet code, that you have proof that you can do the job. When you earn your CW, you can be added to a national registry of certified welders; a very small percentage of welders are on the national registry. It means you’re one of the best.”

With South Piedmont being an accredited test site, not only can students be assured they are getting a high-quality welding education, but they can also complete their CW at their home program.

“It’s more convenient for students, and they’re going to be in a setting where they’re comfortable, using equipment they’re familiar with,” Wulk said. “We’re preparing students to earn their CW from their very first day in the welding program.”

South Piedmont’s Tyson Family Center for Technology is located at 3509 Old Charlotte Highway in Monroe.

To learn more about South Piedmont’s welding program, visit: spcc.edu/programs/welding-technology.

Governor Stein Highlights DMV Challenges, Calls for Increased Investment

Governor Josh Stein has joined Secretary of Transportation Joey Hopkins and DMV Commissioner Paul Tine to highlight North Carolina’s ongoing DMV crisis and call for cross-government partnership to improve the customer experience.

“Hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians each year visit the DMV, and they need to be able to take care of their business in a timely manner,” said Governor Josh Stein. “We are tackling this problem head-on, and Secretary Hopkins, Commissioner Tine, and I are committed to working with our legislature and Auditor Boliek to make the DMV work better for everyone.”

“Every North Carolinian on our roads will need to interact with the DMV at some point, so we have a responsibility to get it right,” said Department of Transportation Secretary Joey Hopkins. “I am pleased to see Commissioner Tine hitting the ground running.”

“Since my appointment a month ago, I have dedicated myself to meeting with DMV customers and team members to learn more about the challenges our state is facing,” said DMV Commissioner Paul Tine. “While we have begun raising pay for examiners, simplifying the website, and finding opportunities to get more people through offices this summer, we know there is much more work to be done to ensure a positive experience for customers and team members alike.”

Governor Josh Stein and the NC Department of Transportation announced Paul Tine’s appointment as Commissioner of the DMV on April 30. Commissioner Tine is working to improve North Carolinians’ experience with the DMV by addressing wait times, staffing challenges, and customer satisfaction. Governor Stein’s 2025-2027 budget proposal includes funding for 61 new Driver License Examiners and 24 new positions to staff new and expanded Driver License Offices. The House budget calls for this same expansion of DMV’s staff. Governor Stein is committed to working with the General Assembly and the State Auditor’s office to find and implement real solutions.

Chair Exercise Classes at the Library

The Hampton B. Allen Library is hosting chair exercise classes every Thursday in June. Class begins at 10:00 a.m. in the library’s Pritchett Room. Everyone is welcome.

Any questions please call 704-694-5177.

Bluegrass Acoustic Music Jam at the Library

The Hampton B. Allen Library will host a bluegrass acoustic music jam on Thursday, June 12, from 6:30 until 8:30 p.m. in the Little Theater. Musicians, singers and spectators are welcome. Jam sessions are open to all age levels and skill levels. Children age 12 and under will need to be accompanied by an adult.

If you have any questions please contact the library at 704-694-5177.

Huge Yard Sale is Saturday

Faith-Based Center of Hope will have another HUGE yard sale this Saturday, June 14 in the parking lot across from Papa Joe’s Pizzeria, at Plank Road Shopping Center, 911 East Caswell Street in Wadesboro. It begins at 8:30 a.m.

All proceeds will go to help our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

Contributions and donations are appreciated.

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

Library to Present Aaliyah Crawford Program on Baking Tips, Dessert Artistry

The Hampton B. Allen Library is hosting a program featuring Aaliyah Crawford, talented pastry chef and culinary arts educator at Anson High School on Monday, June 16. This will be at 10:30 a.m. in the library’s Pritchett Room.

Aaliyah, a graduate of Johnson & Wales University, will be sharing baking tips and information about her passion for dessert artistry. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy the program.

Any questions please call 704-694-8177.