

THE EXPRESS

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

People Fest is Coming Back!

**Food, music, games, family fun
and fireworks will fill uptown on October 10**

After years away, one of Wadesboro's familiar home-town traditions is making its return. People Fest is back, with a full day of food, music, activities and community celebration planned for Saturday, October 10, in uptown Wadesboro. The Town announced earlier this year that the long-running community event would return in 2026.

People Fest will get underway at 9 a.m. and continue until 5 p.m., giving families plenty of time to wander uptown, visit with friends and neighbors and enjoy everything happening throughout the day.

The celebration will feature food trucks, live music, games and activities for children and plenty of family fun. In other words, organizers are covering the important festival necessities: something to eat, something to listen to and something to keep the youngsters occupied while the grown-ups talk (and eat!).

But don't head home when the daytime festivities end. Fireworks are scheduled for 9 p.m., providing a big nighttime finale to People Fest's return.

The Town describes the revived festival as a day of "community connection and celebration," bringing people together again for a Wadesboro tradition centered on good food, family fun and community pride.

For longtime residents, the return offers an opportunity to revisit memories of People Fests from years past, since the first one in 1983. For younger residents and newcomers, 2026 may provide their first chance to discover what all the fuss was about.

Vendors Vendor applications are available at Town Hall and online at www.wadesboronc.gov until September 30.

So mark Saturday, October 10, 2026, on the calendar. People Fest is coming back to Uptown Wadesboro...and apparently it isn't planning to make a quiet entrance.

SPCC Celebrates Opening of HVAC-R Lab with Sept. 3 Community Event

South Piedmont Community College will host "The Coolest Night in Anson" on Thursday, September 3, celebrating the opening of the college's newly renovated HVAC-R lab at the L.L. Polk Campus in Polkton.

The free community event will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. and will give attendees an opportunity to tour the state-of-the-art training facility, meet South Piedmont faculty and staff, explore careers in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration industry, and learn about the college's workforce training programs.

In addition to showcasing the new HVAC-R facility, the evening will feature a live concert by Weekend Friend, along with free barbecue provided by Jon G's Barbecue and prizes.

"The Coolest Night in Anson" will be held at South Piedmont Community College's L.L. Polk Campus, located at 680 U.S. 74 in Polkton. The event is free and open to the community. Free barbecue, prizes and the concert are available while supplies last.

Community members are encouraged to register in advance by scanning the QR code.



Partnership for Children... 30 Years

Thirty years of helping make Anson County a better place to be a child - and to raise one - is certainly something worth celebrating. The Anson County Partnership for Children is marking its 30th anniversary in September, and the community is invited to join the party.

The 30th Year Celebration will be held Thursday, September 10, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Wadesboro. A short program will begin at 5:30 p.m.

For three decades, the Anson County Partnership for Children, a partner in the Smart Start network, has worked to support young children and their families in Anson County. The anniversary celebration offers an opportunity to recognize that work, remember the people who have been part of it and look toward the years ahead.

And after 30 years, there should be plenty of memories to go around. The Partnership is asking community members who have stories or photographs from its history to share them as part of the celebration. Photos and stories may be submitted through the Partnership's online submission form at: forms.gle/Bh62CJNxxkhi9grHE7 or by email to elizabeth.rizzo@ansonchildren.org.

Those planning to attend are asked to RSVP by Monday, August 31, by calling 704-694-4036 or using the online form at the address above.

Thirty years represents an entire generation of Anson County children — quite a milestone for an organization devoted to giving children a strong start.

Grace Senior Takes the Fun to the Park

The Grace Senior Center is packing up the fun and heading outdoors for its Picnic in the Park on Thursday, September 17, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Little Park.

And this is not one of those picnics where you sit quietly on a blanket and wonder who remembered the napkins.

The afternoon will feature pot planting, bingo and a hot dog meal - three activities that don't often appear in the same sentence, but sound like a pretty good time.

Participants can try their hand at planting a pot, test their luck at bingo and then enjoy a hot dog meal. Whether you leave with a thriving plant and a bingo victory is anybody's guess, but at least nobody should leave hungry.

The picnic will be held at Little's Park and Recreation, located at 845 Airport Road in Wadesboro.

Advance registration is requested. To sign up, call the Grace Senior Center at 704-694-6616.

Come for the hot dogs, stay for the bingo - and try not to get overly competitive when somebody else yells "BINGO!" first.



Jordan Hough (above left) won two honors, and Parys McLendon (above right) was recognized for her participation.



Local Girls Shine in State VFW Buddy Poppy Contest

Two young ladies represented Anson County on the state level this summer as Jordan Hough and Parys McLendon participated in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Department of North Carolina Annual Buddy Poppy Contest.

The statewide event was held June 12 in Greensboro, with both girls representing the James D. Henderson VFW Post 10403 Auxiliary in the Buddy Poppy Art Contest.

It turned into an especially memorable day for Jordan, who was named the 2025-2026 Buddy Poppy Princess and winner of the Buddy Poppy Art Contest. The two honors made for a big accomplishment for the young local representative, and gave the folks back home plenty of reason to be proud.

Parys also represented the local Auxiliary in the state competition and will receive a certificate and gift card recognizing her participation.

The Buddy Poppy has long been associated with the VFW and serves as a symbol honoring veterans who sacrificed for their country. Having young people participate in Buddy Poppy activities helps carry that tradition of remembrance and appreciation to a new generation.

The James D. Henderson Post 10403 Auxiliary congratulated Jordan and Parys and expressed appreciation to both girls for getting involved.

For two local girls to take their talents to a statewide VFW event is an accomplishment in itself. Coming home with a Buddy Poppy Princess title and an art contest victory makes the trip to Greensboro even sweeter, and gives Anson County two young representatives worth celebrating.

Grace Senior Center Packs September with Fun

From dancing and crafts to bingo, a picnic and snow cones, September offers plenty to do

September is shaping up to be a busy month at the Grace Senior Center, with activities ranging from exercise and line dancing to crafts, bingo and a Senior Picnic in the Park. And just in case summer tries to hang around a little longer, the center plans to send it on its way with snow cones.

ALL FREE...AND ALL FUN & INFORMATIVE!

The Grace Senior Center, located at 199 Highway 742 South in Wadesboro, has announced the following activities:

- **Chair Exercise Class** Tuesdays from 10 to 11 a.m. and Thursdays from 1 to 2 p.m. Some class times may change.
- **Book Club** Thursday, September 3, from 10 a.m. to noon.
- **Line Dancing** Thursdays, September 3, 10 and 24. Classes may change.
- **Make Flowery Bouquets** Friday, September 4, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Office Closed** Monday, September 7.
- **Planting Seeds** Thursday, September 10, from 2 to 3 p.m.
- **Embossing Cards** Friday, September 11, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- **Paint Pinecones** Friday, September 11, from 1 to 3 p.m. Apparently, even pinecones deserve a little sprucing up for fall.
- **Claris Companion Tablet Class** Mondays, September 14 and 28, from 10 to 11 a.m.
- **Start a Legacy Journal** Tuesday, September 15, from 11 a.m. to noon.
- **Senior Picnic in the Park** Thursday, September 17, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Bring your appetite and enjoy some time outdoors.

- **Bingo** Monday, September 21, from 1 to 2 p.m. Eyes down, cards ready and good luck!
- **National Snow Cone Day/End of Summer Celebration** Tuesday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Summer may be leaving, but at least it leaves behind a snow cone.
- **Scrapbooking 101** Thursday, September 24, from 2 to 3 p.m.
- **Create a Gratitude Jar** Friday, September 25, from 1 to 3 p.m.
- **Making Small Baskets** Tuesday, September 29, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

With exercise, crafts, dancing, learning, food and fellowship on the calendar, there should be something for just about everyone - and plenty of reasons not to sit home wondering what to do.

Anson County Schools Unveils Five-Year Strategic Plan

2026–2031 roadmap focuses on student success, quality staff, safe schools and community engagement

Anson County Schools has unveiled its 2026–2031 Strategic Plan, a five-year roadmap designed to guide decisions, establish priorities and measure the school system's progress.

According to the district, the plan was developed with input from students, staff, families, school and district leaders and community partners. It establishes measurable goals and priorities intended to guide the work of Anson County Schools over the next five years.

The Strategic Plan is centered around four major priorities:

- **Student Learning & Success** Keeping student achievement and success at the center of the district's work.
- **Human Resources & Quality Staff** Focusing on the people who teach, support and serve Anson County students.
- **Safe & Supportive Environments** Providing school environments where students and employees can learn, work and succeed.
- **Community Relations & Family Engagement** Strengthening connections among the school system, families and the wider Anson County community.

District officials describe the Strategic Plan as more than a document, calling it a commitment to students, employees, families and the community and a roadmap for moving Anson County Schools forward.

The district also emphasizes that the plan is intended to be a "living, actionable plan," rather than something that gets printed, placed neatly on a shelf and rediscovered five years from now. It is expected to guide everyday decisions and priorities while providing a way to measure progress.

Anson County Schools plans to release additional information explaining how the four priorities will be put into action throughout the district.

The complete 2026–2031 Strategic Plan is available through the Anson County Schools website (ansonschools.org) and at linktr.ee/ansoncountyschools.

The district is introducing the new plan with its message, "One Community. One Mission. We are Anson!"

School Board Meeting is August 31

The Anson County Board of Education will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, August 31. The meeting will be held in the Anson County Schools Administrative Board Room, located at 320 Camden Road in Wadesboro.

A closed session will begin immediately following the opening of the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The closed session will be held for the purpose of discussing matters related to personnel and property pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) and NCGS 143-318.11(a)(5).

The open session, which is open to the public, will begin at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will also be live-streamed on the Anson County Schools YouTube channel for community members who wish to view the proceedings remotely.

Individuals or groups wishing to address the Board during public comment may sign up in person. A sign-up sheet will be available 30 minutes before the beginning of the meeting. Public comment will take place during the open session at 6:00 p.m.

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