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Motorists, Students Urged to Use Caution as More than 1.5 Million Back in School

More than 1.5 million students across the state started back to school this Monday, which means an influx of cars, buses and pedestrians on North Carolina's roads. The NC Department of Transportation urges students and motorists to do their part to keep everyone safe with this increase in activity. Each year in North Carolina more than 2,000 pedestrians are injured and 160 are killed in collisions with vehicles. Last year, this included four students who were killed when crossing the road to or from a bus.

"These accidents are 100 percent preventable," said Transportation Secretary Tony Tata. "Both motorists and students can play a role in making sure everyone gets back to school safely, by doing things like using caution when approaching stopped school buses and watching out for pedestrians."

NCDOT encourages parents to remind students to follow these basic rules of safety before heading back to school:

- Cross in the crosswalk.
- Look for cars in all directions - including those turning left or right - before crossing the street; never assume a driver will stop.
- Be careful crossing multiple lanes of traffic. Make sure each lane of traffic is clear before you cross.
- Pay attention to where you're walking and take the focus off your cell phone or other electronic device. A moment of distraction could have disastrous consequences.
- Be predictable to drivers and follow the rules of the road—obey signs and signals.
- Cross the street where you have the best view of traffic.
- Always walk on the sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic and as far from the road as you can.

NCDOT encourages motorists to review these basic tips and to watch out for pedestrians and school buses:

- Always stop for a stopped school bus. If the lights are flashing and the stop sign is out, you must stop, including in the following situations:
 - If you are traveling a two-lane road, all traffic from both directions must stop;
 - If you are traveling a two-lane road with a center turn lane, all traffic from both directions must stop;
 - If you are traveling a four-lane road without a median separation, all traffic from both directions must stop;
 - If you are traveling a divided highway of four lanes or more with a median separation, only traffic following the bus must stop; and
 - If you are traveling a road with four or more lanes with a center turn lane, only traffic following the bus must stop.
- Passing a stopped school bus can cost motorists five points on their driver's license and eight points for commercial vehicles.
- Be prepared to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Never pass a vehicle that is stopped for pedestrians.
- Before making a turn, be sure the path is clear of any pedestrians.
- Slow down in areas where you are likely to find pedestrians, such as near bus stops, schools and playgrounds. There is a \$250 penalty for speeding in a school zone in North Carolina.
- Avoid distractions such as food, passengers and using mobile devices.

Visit the Watch for Me NC campaign website (www.watchformenc.org) to learn more about what you can do to keep our roads safe for everyone. Visit the DMV website (www.ncdot.gov/dmv) for more information about school bus laws.

Ansonian Adventures Board Game Now Available

In a release from Lynn Edwards of the Chamber of Commerce: The Anson County Chamber of Commerce's 50th Anniversary Board Game is in the layout and design stage already! We are very excited about this special project and we thank each of you who participated with it. You can now pre-order your game in advance and secure the \$35 pre-order price by visiting www.ansonchamber.org or calling 704-694-4181.

Please share this information with your employees, co-workers, family and friends so that they too can reserve their game. These will make a great collector's item, birthday or Christmas gift!

We will accept pre-orders until the game goes to the print. So lock in your price and reserve your limited edition game now by sending in the form! Quantities are limited.

Games will not be available until full payment is received. Make your checks payable to the Anson County Chamber of Commerce. The address is PO Box 305, Wadesboro NC 28170. The email address is ansonchamber@windstream.net.

Senator McLaurin Speaks Out Against Questionable Pay Raises

Senator McLaurin to Secretary Wos and Governor McCrory: DHHS staff raises send wrong message

On Friday, August 16 Senator Gene McLaurin (D-Richmond) sent a letter to NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Aldona Wos asking her to rescind the recently reported \$22,500 and \$23,000 salary increases awarded to two of her top aides, both 24 years old with minimal work experience, who happened to work previously on Governor Pat McCrory's 2012 gubernatorial campaign.

Senator McLaurin said, "These raises were apparently given in April 2013 at a time when the Governor himself admits that he asked executive agency heads in March to implement a salary and hiring freeze. This is not the time to offer \$85,000 plus salaries to inexperienced state employees."

"To make matters worse, DHHS has awarded salary increases totaling \$1.7 million since the Governor's hiring and salary freeze. Other hard-working state employees, teachers, and highway patrolmen have received no pay raise this year. Having spent my career in business and in local government where fair and just compensation systems were adopted and followed, this sends the wrong message to state employees and taxpayers of NC who deserve better than this."

Black Bear Sightings in Anson County

Public reminded that it is illegal to shoot a bear unless a life is in danger. Bear probably passing through Anson

The Anson County Sheriff's Office has received numerous calls recently regarding a large black bear in the area of Highway 742 North and Winfield Road and other areas north and east of Wadesboro. Sheriff Tommy Allen said that reports of the bear have been numerous the past few days, and a couple of weeks ago there were similar calls of a bear in that general area.



Sheriff Allen said, "I have talked to both state and federal wildlife officers and they have advised us that there is actually little that can be done. Primarily, their advice to the public is not to approach the bear. It is likely passing through and will eventually do so."

J. D. Bricken, Manager of Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge in Ansonville, said, "The black bear's territory has been expanding from both the east and the west, and black bears are being seen in Anson County more often now. This will likely continue or even increase over the years to come."

Both Sheriff Allen and Bricken also advise that it is illegal to shoot a bear in Anson County unless someone's life is in danger. It is rare for a black bear to attack people. Loud noises will tend to scare them away. Mother bears with cubs can be aggressive, but no cubs have been seen. Bears could be a nuisance to farmers with small livestock or turkey or chicken houses - but again that is rare.

If you have questions regarding bears please call the Wildlife Refuge office in Ansonville at 704-694-4424 or NC State Biologist Ruppert Medford at 910-571-9747. The Sheriff's Office will continue to log and monitor reports of sightings but may not dispatch deputies unless public safety is threatened.

Put Life Back Into Your Life

Are you an adult dealing with an ongoing health condition? If you have conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic pain or anxiety, the Living Healthy Workshop can help you take charge of your life. Come get the support and tools you need to self manage your condition. Workshop participants will work together to find practical ways to deal with pain, fatigue and frustration, discover better nutrition and exercise choices, understand new treatment choices, and learn better ways to talk with your doctor and family about your health.

Join a free 2 1/2-hour Living Healthy Workshop, held each week for six weeks. Learn from trained leaders who are dealing with health conditions themselves. Set your own goals and make a step-by-step plan to improve your health - and your life.

Classes will be held every Thursday, from September 12th through October 17th at the Grace Senior Center, from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Sign up now - spaces are limited. To register or get more information, please call Rita Short at 704-694-6217.



Anson Emergency Services Center Construction

The new Anson County Emergency Services Center being built on Country Club Road in Wadesboro is really taking shape. If you have not driven out there lately, you should pay a visit and see the progress being made.

County Manager Lawrence Gatewood said, "The construction is on schedule to be completed in December 2013, and the project is still on budget. We continue to work closely with our partners at Moseley Architects, Messer Construction Company, Anson Bank and Trust and the North Carolina 911 Board to make sure that the facility is well constructed and equipped, and completed on time and within budget. We're very pleased with the progress."

The Emergency Services Center, designed by Moseley Architects of Charlotte, will consolidate all of the county's emergency services under one roof. The building will house the county's Emergency Management Department, which will include the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Fire Marshal's Office, the Emergency Medical Services Department (EMS), and the 911/Emergency Communications Center.

The facility will feature state of the art communications technology, and will be hurricane and blast resistant (the 911 portion). In order to maintain function under adverse conditions, two redundant generators will provide back-up power.

Support spaces will include ambulance vehicle bays, a training room, break out rooms, bunk rooms for 24 hour staff, locker rooms, a fitness room, storage, offices, a server room, a sign shop and administrative spaces.

Gatewood has said that the new \$3.6 million, 24,000 square foot facility should serve Anson County for the next 40+ years.

SPCC Opens New Center for Technology and Health Education

A model of collaboration and partnership

South Piedmont Community College has completed work on Phase 1 of its new Center for Technology and Health Education. All instructional aspects of the college's advanced manufacturing and industrial maintenance programs, including mechatronics and CNC machining courses, have been consolidated into the nearly 50,000-square-foot facility at 3509 Old Charlotte Highway in Monroe.

The Center is a model of collaboration and partnership. The project was made possible by \$3 million in private grant funds - including support from Duke Energy, OMNOVA, and the Golden LEAF Foundation - for start-up courses and the purchase of sophisticated manufacturing equipment and an additional \$3.5 million from Union County for the purchase of the building and property.

The expanded lab will provide students with the opportunity for extensive hands-on experience and one-on-one instruction, hallmarks of South Piedmont's approach to training.

"This is an important step toward meeting our region's growing need for a highly-skilled workforce that is prepared for jobs in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, defense, and energy," said South Piedmont Community College President Dr. Stan Sidor. "It will help us train men and women for great jobs that are available right now to those with the right training, and it strengthens the college as a valuable resource for workforce and economic development in Union and Anson counties."

At an open house and ribbon-cutting event on Friday, August 23, the college welcomed local, state and federal legislative representatives, county and municipal leaders, educational partners, manufacturers, and the media to the Center for Technology and Health Education. The event included demonstrations of the Center's equipment and training capabilities.

The next two phases of the project will include the expansion of classroom, lab, and office space to support the relocation of healthcare and law enforcement training programs.

South Piedmont Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates. Courses earned with an Associate in Arts degree (AA), an Associate in Science degree (AS) or an Associate of Fine Arts degree (AFA) are transferable to the 16 public universities in North Carolina via an articulation agreement between the NC Community College System and the University of North Carolina.

Boating and Driving Safety Campaign Concludes with Labor Day Weekend

The "On the Road, On the Water, Don't Drink and Drive" campaign enters its final holiday period of 2013 with the Labor Day weekend. This multi-agency initiative is designed to combine law enforcement resources to ensure everyone can safely travel on highways and waterways during summer months. The campaign concentrates on three major holiday periods: Memorial Day, July 4th and Labor Day.

Leading the campaign are the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, responsible for enforcing boating regulations; the State Highway Patrol, providing for highway safety; and the Alcohol Law Enforcement division, enforcing "Be 21" underage drinking laws. The campaign is joined by local police and sheriff's departments and supported by Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

"We want to remind everyone to be careful while they enjoy Labor Day weekend," said Col. Dale Caveny, chief of the Commission's Division of Law Enforcement, which patrols public waterways. "We ask that motorists and boaters alike be mindful of the dangerous consequences of impaired driving."

Boat operators can be charged if their blood alcohol concentration is .08 or higher, or if they are impaired by alcohol and/or drugs. The penalties for operating while impaired (OWI) in North Carolina include a maximum \$1,000 fine and possible jail time.

There are more than 200 sworn, full-time wildlife officers across the state who patrol 5,000 square miles of inland streams, rivers, lakes and coastal waterways and instruct certified boating safety education courses. The public can assist officers by reporting boating violations to 1-800-662-7137.

For more information on recreational boating in North Carolina go to www.ncwildlife.org/boating.

Town of Wadesboro Holiday Schedule

The Wadesboro Town Hall will be closed Monday, September 2 for the Labor Day Holiday.

There will be no garbage pickup on that day due to the Labor Day Holiday. The regular garbage collection schedule will resume on Tuesday, September 3.

Bowman Senior High School Class of 1971 Meeting

The Bowman Senior High School Class of 1971 will meet on Saturday, September 7th at 2 p.m. in the Little Theatre at Hampton B. Allen Library. The deposit for the upcoming class reunion is due at this meeting. Final plans for October Festival will be made.

For further details contact Patricia Little at (704) 848-8165 or Winnie Brown at (704) 475-0755.

Blood Drive is September 9

The Community Blood Center of the Carolinas (CBCC) will hold a Blood Drive on Monday, September 9, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Anson Community Hospital. There is currently a regional blood shortage so the CBCC is calling on the public to donate blood as soon as possible. All blood types are needed immediately.

Call 704-972-4700 or visit www.carolinadonor.org to make an appointment today.

Please note the Community Blood Center of the Carolinas' minimum weight requirement for blood donors is 120 pounds.

Woodmen of the World Event on September 11

The Woodmen of the World will hold a ceremony in honor and remembrance on Wednesday, September 11. This event will honor all military personnel, firemen and police officers involved in the tragedy that took place in New York City on that date.

The public is invited to come to the WOW Lodge on Highway 74 West for the ceremony which will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information contact Charles Wilson at 704-272-9243.