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On Tuesday, August 22, 2023, Mrs. Sara Jane Wood Brown peacefully went home with her family gathered around at Autumn Care in Marshville.

Family and friends may pay their respects on Thursday, August 24, 2023, from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. at Leavitt Funeral Home.

The family will have a private graveside service at Bethlehem Cemetery in Ansonville.

Sara was born February 24, 1935, in Trenton, NJ and was a daughter of the late Thomas Davidson Wood and the late Sara Hancock Wood. She was employed with the Horsman Doll Company for seven years prior to meeting her husband.

At the age of 24, she became a dedicated wife, mother, and homemaker.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband James Lewis Brown, her son John Edward Brown, her grandsons, James Jefferson Brown III and Johnathon White, and her son-in-law Rick Cassidy.

Her surviving sons are, James Jefferson Brown II (Karen), Timothy Brown and Frank Brown; her daughters, Janice Cassidy, Jacqueline Harris (Phil), Judy Cook (Doug) and Mary Ann Preslar (Jeff). She was blessed with 20 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

The arrangements are in care of Leavitt Funeral Home and online condolences may be made at [www.leavittfh.com](http://www.leavittfh.com).

## Sheriff Howell Offers Safety Tips for Back to School

Sheriff Scott Howell of Anson County wants this school year to get off to a great start and offers some practical safety tips for parents and kids who are heading back to school.

"Parents have an opportunity as the school year begins to share some important information about personal safety with their children. Teaching kids about potential dangers can help them learn to avoid those dangers," Sheriff Howell said. "The start of the school year is a really good time to remind your kids just how much information is available about them online when they are using their electronic devices on social media. We must teach our children that people who do not have their best interest at heart can use that personal information in a way that might put them in danger."

"We also have to continue to educate our kids about the danger of drugs and substances that can hurt them," Howell added. "We can all learn from the safety tips below and abide by them to make Anson County safer for everyone."

- While walking, remember to always travel with a friend. Two heads are better than one, especially if there's an emergency.
- Don't wear headphones while you are walking alone or with friends so you can hear your surroundings and know if someone is approaching you.
- A stranger is anyone you or your parents don't know well.
- Never take anything like candy or medicine from someone you do not know.
- If a stranger in a car stops to ask you questions, keep walking and never approach the vehicle. Even if they call you by name, do not be fooled. They may have seen your name on a backpack, a lunchbox, even in a local newspaper or on social media.
- Strangers can use tricky tactics to persuade you to come with them like:
  - asking you to walk with them to show you something;
  - asking you to help look for a lost pet or person; or
  - telling you that your mom or dad are hurt and offering to take you to them.
 Unless you know the person, do not go with them!
- If you think you're in any danger, yell for help and run to the nearest business.
- Always tell an adult you trust like a parent, family member or teacher if a stranger has approached you.
- Don't tell anyone you don't know your personal information like your name and address.
- Establish a secret family "code word." If someone claims to know your family but does not know the code word, do not go with them.

"By taking the time to carefully prepare your child on how to handle these situations, you can ensure your child's safety whether they are on their way to school or an after-school activity, heading home, playing on a playground or riding their bikes," Sheriff Howell concluded.

## Anson County's July Unemployment Rate

**Anson County** Anson County's unemployment rate for July was 4.2%, the same as June's rate. Anson County ranked #74 of the 100 counties statewide (low to high). Here are other past rates in Anson County: **2023:** May 4.0%; April 3.6%; March 3.9%; February 4%; January 4.3%. **2022:** December 4.0%; November 4.6%; October 4.9%; September 4.2%; August 4.9%; July 4.7%; June 5.3%; May 4.7%; April 4.6%; March 4.9%; February 5.1%; January 5.1%. **2021:** December 4.4%; November 4.7%; October 5.2%; September 4.9%; August 5.8%; July 6.5%; June 6.1%; May 5.5%; April 5.4%; March 5.9%; February 7.5%; January 7.7%. The **2020** rates were: December 7.1%; November 7.2%; October 7.2%; September 8.5%; August 8%; July 10%; June 7.9%; May 10.1%; and April 8.2%.

In March 2020 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%, just before it was affected by the pandemic.

**Statewide** Statewide the unemployment rate for July was 3.6%, the same as June's rate. Here are other statewide past rates: **2023:** May 3.4%; April 3.1%; March 3.5%; February 3.6%; January 3.7%. **2022:** December 3.2%; November 3.8%; October 3.9%; September 3.3%; August 3.9%; July 3.7%; June 4.1%; May 3.6%; April 3.4%; March 3.6%; February 3.7%; January 3.8%. **2021:** December 3.2%; November 3.4%; October 3.6%; September 3.8%; August 4.4%; July 4.6%; June 4.9%; May 4.5%; April 4.4%; March 4.6%; February 5.6%; January 6%. **2020:** December 6%; November and October 6.1%; September 7%; August 6.8%; July 8.9%.

Anson's total labor force in July was 10,150, with 9,720 employed and 430 unemployed. In June the total labor force was 10,328, with 9,890 employed and 438 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in 39 of North Carolina's counties in July 2023, increased in 27, and remained unchanged in 34. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 6.7 percent while Buncombe and Swain Counties each had the lowest at 2.7 percent.

Two of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases, two increased, and 11 remained unchanged. Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount had the highest rate at 5.2 percent while Asheville had the lowest at 2.9 percent. The not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 3.6 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased in 97 counties, increased in two, and remained unchanged in one. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in July by 23,199 to 5,099,279, while those unemployed increased by 291 to 189,200. Since July 2022, the number of workers employed statewide increased 98,709, while those unemployed decreased 14,075.

It is important to note that employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns; therefore, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in the not seasonally adjusted estimates.

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



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Did you know ceiling fans can make a room feel 4 degrees cooler? To save energy through ceiling fan use, remember to raise your thermostat a few degrees while fans are turned on. Ceiling fans can help improve comfort year-round. In the summer, operate ceiling fans in a counterclockwise direction. Reverse the direction to clockwise during winter months and set fans on a low speed so warm air can circulate from the ceiling to the lower levels of the room. Remember, ceiling fans cool people, not spaces. Be sure to turn them off when you leave the room.

Source: [energy.gov](http://energy.gov)

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