

1783
Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #149
Wadesboro, NC
28170
Postal
Customer

THE EXPRESS

205 West Morgan Street • Wadesboro, NC 28170 • 704-694-2480 • TheExpressNews@gmail.com • www.TheExpressNewspaper.com

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

Anson County Board of Commissioners Meets September 19

The Anson County Board of Commissioners now meets two times per month. The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 19 at 6 p.m. The meetings take place in the Board Room, Suite 209, of the Anson County Government Center which is located at 101 South Greene Street in uptown Wadesboro. To schedule an appearance at a board meeting, please sign up prior to the meeting. Information is available at 704-994-3201. The Commissioners' board meetings are live streamed on their YouTube channel. Also, the videos are archived so they can be viewed at any time. Visit youtube.com and search for Anson Commissioners.

Wadesboro Police Department Welcomes New Officers

Two officers have been sworn in with the Wadesboro Police Department in the past few days. Officer J. Benoit returned to Wadesboro after working with the Richmond County Sheriff's Office. Officer J. Jaramillo is a recent graduate of Basic Law Enforcement Training.



Anson County Schools Testing Data

On September 6, 2023, the North Carolina Department of Education released testing data for the 2022-2023 school year. Each year, schools participate in End-of-Grade (EOG) tests in grades 3-8 reading and math, and science in grades 5 and 8. End-of-Course tests are given for NC Math 1, NC Math 3, English 2, and Biology. Other indicators include the ACT, the ACT WorkKeys, English Learner Progress, and the 4-year Cohort Graduation Rate. In North Carolina, school performance grades (SPG) are based on the achievement component, which makes up 80% of the score, along with the growth component, which makes up the remaining 20%. Schools are then given a letter grade based on the SPG scores. Anson County Schools meeting the state's growth expectations were Lilesville Elementary, Morven Elementary, Peachland-Polkton Elementary, and Wadesboro Elementary. Anson County Early College exceeded growth. Schools whose achievement scores improved in 2022-2023 included Lilesville Elementary, Wadesboro Elementary, Wadesboro Primary School, and Anson County Early College.

Highlights of Anson Schools' 2022-2023 Data:

- The percentage of the district's students who were proficient in grades 3, 4, 5, and 7 increased over 2021-2022 proficiency. NC Math 1 and NC Math 3 proficiency also increased districtwide.
- District proficiency increased in 5th grade science and biology.
- The district's NC Math 3 scores increased from 29.2% proficiency in 2021-2022 to 51.5% in 2022-2023.

School Data Highlights:

- Ansonville Elementary proficiency in fifth grade reading and 3rd grade math remain above pre-COVID 2018-2019 scores.
- Lilesville Elementary proficiency levels increased in 3rd grade reading and math, 4th grade math, and 5th grade science.
- Morven Elementary proficiency increased in reading for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades. Fifth grade math proficiency more than tripled over 2021-2022 scores and surpassed 2018-2019 pre-COVID scores.
- Peachland-Polkton Elementary proficiency increased in 3rd and 5th grade reading and 4th grade math.
- Wadesboro Elementary's 4th grade students' proficiency almost tripled in reading and more than quadrupled in math. Fifth grade science proficiency increased, as well.
- Wadesboro Primary School's 3rd grade students increased proficiency in both reading and math.
- Anson Middle School's 7th grade students' math proficiency increased in 2022-2023 from 2021-2022 proficiency.
- Anson High School NC Math 3 proficiency increased from 10.2% proficient in 2021-2022 to 39% proficient in 2022-2023. Biology and Math 1 scores also increased over 2021-2022 proficiency.
- Anson County Early College proficiency levels increased in all EOC courses. The greatest gains were in NC Math 1 and NC Math 3.

District and school leaders are proud of the growth that students have made and their accomplishments in 2022-2023. They also acknowledged that improvements are still needed in some areas and they will continue to work hard to accomplish these goals. The school district is currently in Year 2 of the District Strategic Plan.



Wooten has put together an all-local cast. Amanda Traywick stars as Pinky, Jason Price as Bobby, Chipper Long as Bob, and, making her stage debut as Marge, is Brittany Price. The show runs September 15-24, Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. This show contains adult language and situations. Tickets can be purchased at ansoniatheatre.com or by calling 704-694-4950.

2023-24 Ansonia Theatre Season Opens with Pageant Play this Weekend

The Ansonia Theatre is readying for the 2023-24 Season with the comedy *Pageant Play* opening this weekend. *Pageant Play*, written by Mark Setlock and Matthew Wilkas, is a hilarious spoof of the sometimes terrifying and surreal world of child pageants. Pinky Corningfield will do anything to make sure that her little angel wins the ultimate title, Supreme Queen. When Marge and her daughter Puddle, newcomers to the pageant circuit, show up and start stealing all the glory, an all-out war ensues. Pinky, along with her minions, Bob and Bobby, use some unorthodox methods to ensure that her darling daughter Chevrolet is victorious. Play Director Tommy

Heal A Heart Through the Arts! It's National Arts in Education Week.

September 10-16 is National Arts in Education Week. A time for communities to come together to advocate, educate and celebrate the impact and transformative power of arts in education. With community leaders who support the arts in our schools with both funding and policies, we advocate and ensure our youth the chance to find their niche, experience those "safe spaces" we often hear about, and unlock their hidden talents. Through education we ensure greater understanding of the significance of arts in education and what an impact it can have. And, we celebrate by telling the world how the arts have personally contributed to the well-being of millions. Head over to social media or your local newspaper and read for yourself. Better yet, write or post one of your own. Someone who has shared her stories is Miss North Carolina, Taylor Loyd. She serves as an arts ambassador across our state, and her service initiative, Healing Hearts Through the Arts, promotes the arts as a tool for mental health and well-being. Taylor has shared her experiences as a young child who wanted to sing on stage, but suffered debilitating fear and anxiety. She spoke of having her mom hold her microphone because her hands were so shaky she couldn't do it herself. She shared how she turned her back to her audience just to be able to sing her song. She shared her trials of trying out for school plays and talent shows year after year, but never being selected. She felt lost and unfulfilled. But, through a program in her school she and other students were given tickets to an opera. It was there she found her calling, her passion, and ultimately her success. And that program she credits for opening so many doors. She knew she wanted to sing, but she didn't know the passion she would feel until she attended that first opera. Artistic expression comes in many forms and can be an immersive and meditative experience. It can bring you to uninhibited and freeing places in your life, can be a safe haven for you to land, or the one place where you find peace. And whether it's music, drawing, dance, movement, poetry, drama, writing, painting, sculpture, theater, architecture, photography, or a hundred other things, it can be life changing. For students who find solace in the arts, students who are nurtured in their thoughts without limits and boundaries, they will likely soar to great heights. Who can say where they will go, what they will do, or what they will become? The sky's the limit. How many people will be saved from the traumas they experience on a daily basis simply by finding something they're good at for the first time, or finding that one person who understands and advocates for them. The words, "Healing Hearts Through the Arts," reminds us how powerful it can be to use the tools we have before us to foster and nurture a student's mental health and well-being. And, those words remind me of Mr. Wayne Davis, my band director. He and his program were therapeutic and healing during a very traumatizing time in my life. I've told him my story and I've thanked him several times for believing in me. But, I would like to take this opportunity to do it once more. Mr. Davis, you are one of my life's greatest blessings as an educator, mentor, role model and friend. Through band and all of its components, I found my safe haven, my place of peace. And I thank you today and every day from the bottom of my "Heart, Now Healed Through the Arts." *By Melanie Lyon*

Groundbreaking for New ACTS Facility

Anson County Transportation System (ACTS) received federal and state funding to build a new transit facility. The facility will be located at 575 Highway 52 South in Wadesboro, next to the County Annex. (The former Pee Dee Electric building.) A groundbreaking ceremony was held on Wednesday, September 6 to commemorate the construction of the new facility. Transit Director Tanya Byrd said, "We are excited to be moving forward with the project. Scott Rowell started the application process back in 2019 along with other counties in North Carolina, and Anson County was one of the counties chosen for the funding. We are going to have signage in memory of Scott Rowell on the building." Byrd continued, "Along the way we have acquired more federal and state funding for the project. We are looking at having it completed sometime the first of the new year 2024. I have worked very closely with Anson County Manager Len Sossamon, Jennifer Hibbert-NCDOT, Scott Miller-NCDOT and Christopher Dodson-NCDOT to keep this project moving forward, and I am very excited to see the finished product. I would like to thank all four of them for helping us get to where we are. I would also like to thank the residents of Anson County and the Anson County Commissioners for allowing this project to take place. Last but not least, I would like to thank my staff for stepping up and going above and beyond the call of duty to take care of the residents of Anson County." Pictured below at the groundbreaking are, from left: Phillip Newton, General Manager, DA Griffin Construction; Jamie Caudle, Anson County Commissioner; Robert Mims, Anson County Commissioner; David Griffin, President, DA Griffin Construction; Priscilla Little-Reid, Anson County Commissioner; Len Sossamon, Anson County Manager; Tanya Byrd, Anson County Transit Director; JD Bricken, Anson County Commissioner; Scott Miller, NCDOT and Lawrence Gatewood, Anson County Commissioner.



Market on Market in Cheraw is Saturday!

Market on Market will be this Saturday, September 16, from 9:00am to 12pm in downtown Cheraw. The family-friendly monthly event features art, produce, food and entertainment on the third Saturday of each month from May through the fall. Local farmers will also have produce and plants available for purchase. Cheraw High School Future Farmers of America will be selling their beautiful Mums. There will be free art activities for kids. Cheraw will be getting ready for SC Jazz Festival with a free Mini-Workshop on "Sidewalk Chalk Creations" with all supplies provided. This is an opportunity to learn the grid technique for this unique art-form. Also, Deborah Adams will lead a free yoga session at 9 a.m. Bring a mat or towel and join in. The Columbia Marionettes return for this September Market! Contact the Cheraw Arts Commission by calling 843.537.8420 x 12 for additional information about the Market event.

Hampton B. Allen Library Author Event and Book Signing September 18

The Hampton B. Allen Library is hosting an author event and book signing on Monday, September 18 at 10:30 a.m. The featured author is Irene Harrington with her latest book *I Can See Clearly Now*. This event will be in the library's Pritchett room. Everyone is invited to come, meet Irene and hear about her writing journey. Any questions please call 704-694-5177.

The Express is on the web at www.TheExpressNewspaper.com