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**Living in A Small Town**

This column was originally published on August 11, 2011 John Mellencamp's song, Small Town, sums up pretty well what it's like living in one. For me that small town is Wadesboro. Having been raised just eight miles away in Polkton, living in a small town is something I know a lot about. I didn't filter in from a big city, hoping to figure out how small town living is different. I know from experience, and as they say, experience IS the greatest teacher.

My grandparents, my parents, my job and my education all come from the small towns and communities of Anson County. And though I have friends all over the country, most of my friends and family are from here, the same small town I live in today.

Mellencamp says, "I cannot forget where it is that I come from. I cannot forget the people who love me. I can be myself here in this small town, and people let me be just what I want to be." You cannot forget the town you come from, who its people are, and the freedoms you are provided by such a life. And that's where I find myself at this point, venturing toward "expert status" as it pertains to living in a small town. Knowing the ins and outs, the dos and the don'ts, the pros and cons, is like being handed the answer key to the "how to live life in a small town" final exam, a test everyone should be required to take if moving into small town USA without prior knowledge.

Many among us have those same answer keys and we all understand the differences between big city living and what we have here. Knowing those differences gives us the ability to see things a bit more clearly than others may. We know what the expectations are and we live according to the book of small town etiquette.

Take Mayberry for example. Andy Griffith was from a small town, grew up and worked in that same small town, and was wise beyond years from his experiences. Andy knew every citizen and what to expect from each. Remember Otis, the town drunk? Otis exhibited behavior expected of him. Andy's prior knowledge of that behavior allowed him the chance to help Otis, just like the remaining townspeople - all with their own personal plights.

Now I'm not saying the above scenarios could ever actually happen in real life, but there are lessons to learn from characters like those from Mayberry. Lessons in patience, understanding, concern, and relationships can all be taken from the scripts of television shows depicting small town living. Of course Andy Griffith tops my list (Mayberry), but others also come to mind. Let's see, there's Little House on the Prairie (Walnut Grove), Northern Exposure (Cicely), Leave it to Beaver (Mayfield), Sanford and Son (the Watts neighborhood), Ozzy and Harriett (the suburbs), Gunsmoke (Dodge City,) Alice (Mel's Diner), Good Times (rental housing project), Happy Days (Milwaukee), and let's face it, the list could go on forever.

Some settings took place not in small towns, but rather small spaces, ranging anywhere from a greasy spoon to a junkyard. You became familiar with friends, foes and family. You knew all you needed to know because what you didn't know someone else did!

In my town I know all that I need to, from her people, her places and her small town spaces. I know what's in and what's not. I know who to speak to and who to avoid. I know where to go and what to see. I know most of what there is to know about you and about me, 'cause living in a small town leaves no privacy.

The positives far outweigh the negatives. You can pump your gas before paying; have your check cashed without an I.D. Everyone knows you by name and calls out to greet you in most cases. The stars are brighter and bigger from your own backyard than any big city I've ever seen. Small town life is a choice we in Anson County have made. You either love it and stay, or you don't and move away. Either lifestyle is what you make of it. In the words of Lillian Dickson, "Life is like a coin. You can spend it any way you wish, but you only spend it once." And with that said, I try very hard to make the most of this small town life, my personal choice from years past.

"I've seen it all in a small town, had myself a ball in a small town. Got nothing against a big town, but a small town's good enough for me."

By Melanie Lyon

**Anson County  
Farm Bureau  
Annual Meeting  
Monday, October 7th**

**FARM  
BUREAU  
ANSON**

**Location: Lockhart-Taylor Center**  
514 North Washington Street • Wadesboro, NC

**Time: Doors will open at 6:15 p.m.**  
Dinner starts at 6:30 p.m.  
Business meeting starts at 7 p.m.

**Admission: We can only allow  
2 people per membership**  
You must be present for your guest to come.  
\*Please present your membership card at the door.

This is the Annual Meeting of the members of the Anson County Farm Bureau, Inc., a North Carolina corporation (the "Corporation"). During the meeting, the members will consider a proposed amendment to the Corporation's bylaws regarding the eligibility requirements for the Corporation's Officers and Directors.

*We look forward to seeing you there. Ronnie Mills, President*

**Better Business Bureau Investment Scams  
Investigation Tallies 4,000 reports, Significant Losses**

Since 2020, investment scam reports to BBB Scam Tracker totaled more than 4,000, reaching a three-year high in 2023. Scammers blended aspects of various scams, including romance and cryptocurrency, to trick targets into handing over large sums of money.

Reports to Better Business Bureau show that investment scams often take the form of long-term confidence scams, where fraudsters pursue romantic and platonic relationships to gain the trust of their targets. That has caused losses to rise, with the median report increasing from \$1,000 in 2021 to almost \$6,000 this year.

In "Investment Scams: Scams linked to crypto and romance rise, according to BBB study" BBB examines patterns of reports, reviews the amount of money lost and shares stories from those caught up in the scams so the public can avoid them.

**Key findings:**

- Investment scammers target victims throughout North America, eyeing targets with existing investments and retirement accounts.
- Fraudsters use the dense and sometimes misunderstood world of cryptocurrency to evade suspicion and lure in victims.
- These scams can go on for months at a time before being detected, allowing scammers to steal thousands of dollars.
- These scams largely originate in Southeast Asia due to organized crime, but a growing response to fraud in this region has led fraudsters to move their scam operations to other countries.
- Many low-level scammers are victims of forced labor, complicating the problem of prosecuting those involved.

**Investment Scam reports across North America (2021-2023)**

- 3,352 – BBB Scam Tracker
- 301,840 – Federal Trade Commission's Consumer Sentinel Network
- 12,573 – Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre

**Scam survivor stories:**

Erin in North Carolina, told BBB she met "Andrew" on a Christian dating app, an Italian native now living in Wesley Heights in Charlotte, NC. After developing a "relationship" with Andrew over the course of a few weeks, Erin started making deposits into a crypto account. After several weeks and a final "tax payment" to the IRS, Andrew disappeared and disconnected his phone number, leaving Erin with losses in the hundreds of thousands.

Hallas in North Carolina, reported to BBB about a cryptocurrency scam he encountered on social media. Unbeknownst to him, a friend's Instagram account was hacked. The scammer, posing as the friend, said they made \$10,000 in three hours via Bitcoin. The scammers convinced Hallas to buy \$3,700 worth of Bitcoin and then immediately transferred the funds to another website and disappeared.

**Red flags**

- Little-known cryptocurrencies
- Requests to share your cryptocurrency wallet with someone you don't trust completely
- Strategies offering guaranteed returns
- An investment that takes little effort or time to pull off
- Someone offers their secret strategy
- Someone says not to research their claims
- Too-good-to-be-true claims
- A stranger suddenly wants to befriend you

**Tips to Spot This Scam:**

- Be very wary of buzz words. Certain phrases should raise a red flag for an investment opportunity. Don't believe anything that is "guaranteed" to do well, or that offers low or no risk with a high return.
- The investment industry is highly regulated. Be wary if investments are unregistered with the SEC or other investment industry regulators. Also, check licensing for the sellers.
- High-pressure sales tactics are also a big warning sign. Many risky investments are sold at "opportunity meetings" or other high-pressure situations. A similar tactic is the use of a "shill," a decoy who offers a fictional success story but is really being paid by the promoter of the plan. Some pitches leverage a shared connection such as the same ethnicity, church, profession, etc. Be on the lookout for attempts to prey on an affinity.
- How do you make money? If you find that the reward for recruiting new distributors and selling them products and training materials is more than the reward for selling products, you may be dealing with a pyramid scheme.

Visit [BBB.org](http://BBB.org) to check out a business or register a complaint, BBB Scam Tracker to report a scam and [BBB.org/scamstudies](http://BBB.org/scamstudies) for more on this and other scams.

**Anson High School Volleyball Results**

• **Tuesday, September 24 - Anson won** their home game against Piedmont (3-0) 25-11, 25-22, 25-17. **Stat Leaders Aces:** Brooklyn Miles 5, Hannah Austin 3, Alena Baxter 2, Lauren Lomax 2. **Kills:** Alena Baxter 10, Brooklyn Miles 6, Lauren Lomax 5. **Assists:** Allie Steagall 23. **Digs:** Hannah Austin 14, Allie Steagall 14, Brooklyn Miles 9. **Blocks:** Eva Hyatt 3, Brooklyn Miles 1, Alena Baxter 1.

• **Wednesday, September 25 - Anson won** their home game against Chesterfield (3-1) 25-27, 25-21, 25-11, 25-19. **Stat Leaders Aces:** Brooklyn Miles 6, Allie Steagall 3, Alena Baxter 2. **Kills:** Alena Baxter 14, Brooklyn Miles 8, Allie Steagall 7, Lauren Lomax 5. **Assists:** Allie Steagall 25, Hannah Austin 5. **Digs:** Allie Steagall 22, Brooklyn Miles 17, Hannah Austin 12, Lauren Lomax 10. **Blocks:** Eva Hyatt-2, Brooklyn Miles-1, Lauren Lomax-1.

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