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Anson County Manager Lawrence Gatewood Announces that He is Ending His Tenure December 31

With the letter presented below, Anson County Manager Lawrence Gatewood announced his intentions to retire from that position on December 31. Gatewood's time as County Manager is noted especially for his spearheading many needed major projects in Anson County, including renovating the courthouse, renovating the Belk Building, guiding the creation of the Anson County Government Center, planning and construction of the Anson County Emergency Services Center, creation of the Anson Animal Shelter, and planning and moving toward construction of the Anson Agri-Civic Center.

Gatewood's letter: "After careful consideration and much deliberation, I have informed the Board of County Commissioners that I will not seek renewal of my employment contract when it expires December 31, 2014. This is my final and irrevocable decision and I am truly excited about it.

I want to thank you for your hard work and support, and I especially want to thank the Anson County Board of Commissioners - Chairman Anna H. Baucom, Vice Chairman Ross Streater, Bobby Sikes, Dr. Jim Sims, Harold C. Smith, Vancine Sturdivant and Jarvis Woodburn - for entrusting me with the fantastic opportunity to serve as County Manager. Sincerely, Lawrence"

Anna Baucom released this response to Gatewood's retirement announcement: "The Board of County Commissioners accepted Lawrence Gatewood's decision not to renew his contract when it expires at the end of 2014. We are grateful for Mr. Gatewood's service to Anson County.

He has served on the Wadesboro Town Council and with Anson County's Social Services Department, as Anson County's Personnel Director and as County Manager. We are looking forward to seeing what he does next.

Lawrence's contributions to county government through his thoughtful planning and attention to detail have set a standard that your board will continue to work toward. Please join the Board in sharing best wishes for Lawrence. Anna Baucom"

Pee Dee Electric Announces Community Solar Project



Pee Dee Electric has announced plans to install a 100-kW community solar farm adjacent to their corporate headquarters in Wadesboro. The community solar farm will have 360 individual panels which will produce approximately 150,000 kWhs of electricity annually.

Members of Pee Dee Electric will have the opportunity to purchase individual panels and then sell the power produced by the panels back to the cooperative each month. Participants of the project will receive a credit on their electric bill for their pro rata share of the output of the solar farm. In addition, Pee Dee Electric will maintain the panels and insurance requirements for the solar farm, eliminating a costly burden for the member.

"Pee Dee Electric's Community Solar Farm offers several advantages to our members," stated Donnie Spivey, CEO of Pee Dee Electric. "By grouping solar panels together in a solar farm, members will benefit from economies of scale that is often times not attainable when panels are installed individually. The Community Solar Farm approach eliminates certain barriers that prevent individuals from installing solar at their homes, such as tree shading, roof size and weight restrictions, availability of land, or not owning the home where you reside."

Pee Dee Electric, in conjunction with electric cooperatives across the nation, has long advocated for a balanced approach to electric power generation that encompasses electricity generated from nuclear, clean coal, natural gas and renewable resources. Pee Dee Electric's Community Solar Farm supports this type of 'All of the Above' strategy by promoting the use of a renewable resource - solar power.

Clearing and grading of the land has begun and site preparation is underway. Construction of the solar farm will begin in mid-November to early December, with a targeted completion date for the end of 2014.

Details of the project, such as cost of the panels, contract terms, etc. are still being finalized. Members of Pee Dee Electric who are interested in learning more about the Community Solar Farm are asked to contact Todd Moore at 704-694-7607, or email their questions and interest to solar@pdemc.com.

Pee Dee Electric is a not-for-profit cooperative whose goal is to provide reliable, dependable electric service for its members while focusing on value, quality customer service, and enhancing life in the communities we serve. Pee Dee's service area consists of Anson, Richmond, Union, Stanly, Montgomery, Moore, and Scotland counties. For more information about Pee Dee Electric please visit www.pdemc.com.

Freddie Paxton Awarded Jail Administrator of the Year



On September 24 Anson County Jail Administrator Capt. Freddie Paxton was recognized and awarded the Jail Administrator of the Year for 2014 by the North Carolina Jail Administrators' Association. The presentation was made at their annual training conference in Greensboro. The Jail Administrators' Association is made up of the 100 plus county jail administrators and senior jail staff across North Carolina. The Association recognizes one of their own each year who has been nominated by their jail staff and recommended by their Sheriff for "meritorious service and major accomplishments that enhances the overall operations of their county facility."

Sheriff Tommy Allen, who attended the evening ceremony, said that he was most pleased with Paxton's recognition by his peers. "Capt. Paxton has been my jail administrator since 2006. He has improved every aspect of our jail operations and continues to meet all

local, state and federal standards for a facility this age and size," said Sheriff Allen. "He has implemented all new policy and procedures in the jail; overseen a complete renovation of the main control room and holding cell area; updated medical and sick call procedures; implemented a "cashless" bookkeeping system; set up a new food service contractor and upgraded the jail's computer and security camera systems. Those are all complicated tasks. The county could not ask for a more loyal, dedicated, hard-working and well informed employee. I'm fortunate to have someone of his caliber."

Capt. Paxton has been in law enforcement since 1993 and a Sheriff's Deputy since 1996. In addition to his jail administrator duties, Paxton is a member of the Anson County Board of Elections, a member of the Morven Volunteer Fire Department, Kilwinning Masonic Lodge #64 and a Deacon in his church.

Vets Appreciation Night at AHS Football Game October 24

In honor of veterans and their special guests, Anson County Schools and Woodmen of the World extend an invitation to join them at Anson High School Stadium for a special "pregame" ceremony on Friday, October 24. Anson High School takes on the Cuthbertson Cavaliers. The Anson High School Marching Band and the J.R.O.T.C. will conduct the "Presentation of Colors" utilizing a 60 x 100 US Flag.

There will also be a tailgating for veterans starting at 6 p.m. Veterans and special guests are asked to use the entrance located off Highway 74, directly across from Wal-Mart.

Veterans who plan to attend are asked to RSVP before October 17 by calling 704-694-2631.



Taste of the Pee Dee - Engaging, Enticing, Entertaining!

On Saturday, October 11 uptown Wadesboro was the place to be as the first annual Taste of the Pee Dee kicked off at 9 a.m. The family friendly festival sponsored by the Town of Wadesboro had a little something for everyone. Engaging activities included Escape the Zombies 5K Walk/Run/Obstacle Course presented by the Wadesboro Police Department (Garrett Thomas was the winner), Discover Anson Bike Ride presented by the Anson County Chamber of Commerce, Timber Sport Competition and a Climbing Wall.

There were plenty of enticing foods, including BBQ by Anson Rescue Squad, Civitan Hot Dogs and lots of wings, funnel cakes and sweets. A Food bake-off presented by NC Cooperative Extension also proved to be very enticing for those who love to cook as well as those who love to taste! Janice Dennis won first place for her Persimmon Pudding, Betty Hasty won second place for her Carolina Apple Cake and Minnie Moore won third place for her Pecan Pie - all proving the local tastes of the Pee Dee to be scrumptious indeed.

Atop the list of entertainers were several local groups and bands who provided music, as well as other entertainment throughout the beautiful day. The Mixx, the Divine Angels, Gina Clarke & Family, Sons of Saron, B. J. Pratt, Lucas Gathings and Kyle Leary filled the streets with their musical sounds. Local baton school group Majorettes by Melanie performed to a packed audience.

Several entertaining activities for children were hosted - a Kids' Safety Zone sponsored by the Wadesboro Fire Department, face painting, a tractor pull (Luke Thomas was the winner) and a creative squash contest (Riley Jones was the winner).

Unfortunately the night concert and fireworks were cancelled due to rain, but otherwise the day's festivities went off without a hitch, and the weather during the day couldn't have been better.

There are lots more pictures on page 6. Thank you Town of Wadesboro for the engaging, enticing and entertaining way we were able to spend an October Saturday in Anson County. We can't wait for next year!

By Melanie Lyon

Groups Petition EPA to Oppose Natural Gas Permit in Wadesboro

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League and Pee Dee WALL have filed a petition with the US Environmental Protection Agency opposing the natural gas pipeline compressor in Wadesboro. The petition calls upon the EPA to revoke the permit issued by the NC Department of Air Quality in September because it allows excess toxic pollution levels. The plant is operated by Piedmont Natural Gas.

Lou Zeller, Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, explained that his group took action under Clean Air Act Section 505 because the state had failed to heed earlier requests. He said, "We filed our petition to the EPA in part because the state's permit allows 17,560 pounds of formaldehyde to be emitted into the air over Wadesboro annually." Formaldehyde is a toxic gas dangerous to human health. Zeller continued, "Not only is pollution from the plant excessive, it places a disproportionate burden on low income and minority populations." The petition calls for a cumulative impact analysis of pollution in Anson County.

Denise Lee, President of Pee Dee WALL, agreed saying, "This is one of the many threats to Anson County's environment. The industry is relying on the citizens' lack of knowledge so they can push this on us. We will not be silent."

The groups' petition points to studies showing historic patterns of high pollution in at-risk communities and faults the DAQ with not performing an environmental justice analysis.

Cary Rodgers, the League's environmental justice community organizer, sees the permit as an example how North Carolina is trying to deregulate pollution. He said, "It appears that DAQ is cooking the books in order to allow energy companies to profit." Last month the League filed a similar petition against a Duke Energy Progress gas-powered electric plant in neighboring Richmond County. Rodgers added, "People have no clue that PNG is approved to dump tons of toxic cancer causing pollutants in their air. EPA needs to revoke this permit."

Rodgers associated the compressor with a larger issue. He said, "This plant is related to fracking issue in Anson County." He said that once the gas is extracted from the earth, it is transported in trucks, compressed and delivered by pipelines to be burned for heat and power. At each stage in this process, pollution is created. "This is an example how they are setting up and expanding the infrastructure for gas."

Rodgers and Lee encourage all Anson County residents to attend the next anti-fracking meeting at Hampton B. Allen Library at 6 p.m. on Thursday, November 13.

The Piedmont Natural Gas compressor station is located on Pleasant Grove Church Road in Wadesboro. Power for the compressor is provided by eight natural gas-fired internal combustion engines, each rated at 4,735 horsepower.

The petition was filed on October 3; the EPA has 60 days to respond.

The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League was founded in 1984 and has chapters in six states. Its local chapter Pee Dee W.A.L.L. (Protecting our Water, Air, Land and Lives), formally Anson County CACTUS (Citizens Against Chemical Toxins and Underground Storage) was organized in 1982.

Friday Night Football Game Postponed Until Monday

The Anson High School versus Piedmont football game scheduled for this Friday, October 17 has been rescheduled to Monday, October 20. The game will be played at Piedmont High School at 6:30 p.m. The Junior Varsity game scheduled for this Thursday has been canceled.

Ron Massey, Piedmont High School's Head Football Coach, died of an apparent heart attack on Saturday, October 11 at the age of 56.

Anson Athletics extends condolences to Ron Massey's family and to Piedmont High School Athletics.

Chamber Members Invited to Business After Hours at Anson Health & Rehab

Anson Health & Rehabilitation and the Anson County Chamber of Commerce cordially invite Chamber members to attend a Business After Hours on Thursday, October 16, from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. The event will take place at Anson Health & Rehab, located at 405 South Greene Street in Wadesboro. The facility was formerly known as Lillie Bennett.

This will be an opportunity to meet Marketing Director Debbie Malarz and all the staff, take a tour of the facility, and enjoy beer, wine and heavy hors d'oeuvres.

Rabies Vaccination Clinic

The fall Rabies Vaccination Clinic will be held on Saturday, October 18 at Brown Creek Animal Hospital, on Highway 74 in Polkton, from 2 to 5 p.m. All dogs, cats and ferrets that are four months of age or older must have a current rabies vaccination that is administered by a licensed veterinarian.

Wadesboro Council Meeting is Thursday

The Wadesboro Town Council meeting that had been scheduled for Thursday, October 9 has been rescheduled for this Thursday, October 16 at 3 p.m. at Town Hall.

This special meeting has been called to view a demo of an automated garbage truck. The public is invited to attend. However, any members of the public need to be at the Town Hall by 2:50 p.m. to be shuttled to Wadesboro's public works yard for safety reasons.