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

## Board of Elections Meeting is Friday

The Anson County Board of Elections will hold a meeting this Friday, November 8 at 11 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Board of Elections Office, located at 402 Morven Road in Wadesboro. Other business may be conducted during the meeting.

- Here is the agenda:
- Sample Hand to Eye Count of random precincts selected by the State Board (to verify election equipment accuracy)
  - Write in Tally of Votes for the November 5, 2019 Municipal Election
  - Other Business may be conducted at this time.
  - Questions, comments and other matters
- To appear on a meeting agenda you must provide notice in writing by 5 p.m. on the Thursday before the next meeting. During all board meetings, those in attendance are asked to refrain from comments and questions to the board unless they are called upon by the board. At the end of each meeting the board will open the floor for comments and questions.

For more information call 704-994-3223.

### Upcoming Dates:

- Thursday, November 7** Sample hand to eye count for Municipal Election, 11 a.m.
- Monday, November 11** County offices closed for Veterans Day
- Friday, November 15** Municipal Election Canvass Day, 11 a.m.
- Monday, November 18** Deadline for candidate to request recount
- Tuesday, November 19** Deadline to file election protest, 5 p.m.
- Thursday, November 28** County offices closed for Thanksgiving
- Monday, Dec. 2 (12 p.m.) to Friday, Dec. 20 (12 p.m.)** Candidate filing for 2020 Primary Election
- Tuesday, December 3** Regular Board of Elections meeting, 5 p.m.
- Monday, December 9** One Stop/Early Voting plans due to the state board for primary

## Veterans Day Celebration is Nov. 11

The community is invited to come and help celebrate Veterans Day at Wadesboro Park on Monday, November 11, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy live music by the band Two Stories Wide as well as a hot meal. Wadesboro Park is located at 1000 Gatewood Avenue, just off Morven Road.

In the case of inclement weather the event will be held at the Woodmen Life Lodge, located at 2540 Highway 74 West in Wadesboro.

## FBI Arrests Corrections Officer for Smuggling a Controlled Substance at Lanesboro Correctional Institution

A federal grand jury sitting in Charlotte has indicted Eric Lemond Blyther, 46, of Hoffman, NC for smuggling a controlled substance at Lanesboro Correctional Institution in Polkton while employed as a correctional officer. The indictment was unsealed on Wednesday, October 30 in federal court, following Blyther's arrest by the FBI.

Special Agent in Charge John A. Strong of the FBI's Charlotte Field Office, joined U.S. Attorney Murray in making the announcement.

According to charges contained in the federal indictment, Blyther worked as a correctional officer at the Lanesboro Correctional Institution (LCI), since renamed Anson Correctional Institution, a state prison located in Polkton. The LCI housed medium and close-security inmates and was one of the state's largest prisons. As alleged in the indictment, as a correctional officer, Blyther's duties included the supervision of inmates, and ensuring safe, secure and orderly prison operations. Inmates within the LCI were prohibited from possessing controlled substances and are permitted to use controlled substances only when prescribed by a medical professional and under the direct supervision of LCI staff. Correctional officers were also prohibited from accepting gifts from inmates, performing favors for inmates, or providing inmates with narcotic drugs or any other item forbidden by LCI rules.

According to the indictment, between August and September 2018, while employed at LCI as a correctional officer, Blyther accepted a bribe to smuggle a controlled substance into the LCI on behalf of an inmate housed at the facility. Blyther was arrested by the FBI on Tuesday, October 29, 2019, and had his initial appearance on October 30 before U.S. Magistrate Judge David S. Cayer.

Blyther is charged with use of interstate facility to facilitate bribery, which carries a maximum prison term of five years and a \$250,000 fine; extortion under color of official right, which carries a maximum prison term of 20 years and a \$250,000 fine; and possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance, which carries a maximum prison term of 10 years and a \$250,000 fine.

All charges in the indictment are allegations. The defendant is innocent until proven guilty beyond reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The FBI investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Dana Washington, of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Charlotte, is in charge of the prosecution.

## Town of Wadesboro Veterans Day Schedule

Wadesboro Town Hall will be closed on Monday, November 11, 2019, to celebrate Veterans Day. There will be no garbage pickup on that day. Garbage collection will be shifted a day later the entire week. Monday's route will be picked up on Tuesday, Tuesday's route will be picked up on Wednesday, etc. through Friday.

The Town of Wadesboro appreciates your consideration in allowing town employees time with their families. As always, you will still be able to leave your utility bill payments in the night deposit box at Town Hall. If you have an emergency, please call Dispatch at 704-694-2167.



## Fire Safety Week Celebrated at Peachland-Polkton Elementary

Peachland-Polkton Elementary School had a few special visitors for Fire Safety Day, including Smokey Bear and Sparky the Dog! The North Carolina Forestry Service taught students about the dangers of forest fires. The Polkton Fire Department gave students a fun tour of the fire truck!

All of the students were extremely excited to see Sparky the Dog and Smokey the Bear!

School staff are thankful for supportive community members who invest in the safety and education of our students!

Pictured at left is Mrs. Brown's first grade class.

## Open Enrollment Has Begun on HealthCare.gov

**NC Navigators are your guide to affordable care. Call 1-855-733-3711 (toll-free) or visit [ncnavigator.net](http://ncnavigator.net) to make your free, in-person appointment with an NC Navigator near you. The average plan cost for next year has decreased.**

NC Navigators are here to help North Carolinians enroll in affordable health insurance plans on [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) during the Affordable Care Act's seventh open-enrollment period, which started November 1 and runs through December 15.

Throughout open enrollment, North Carolina consumers can call 1-855-733-3711 (toll-free) or visit [ncnavigator.net](http://ncnavigator.net) to schedule a free, confidential, in-person appointment with a certified NC Navigator in their area.

Consumers can also meet with navigators by attending any of the 80 free enrollment events to be held across the state during open enrollment. All enrollment events are free and open to the public. No registration is required. Check out the events calendar on [ncnavigator.net](http://ncnavigator.net) for the complete list. NC navigators are trained to help consumers enroll in coverage on the Health Insurance Marketplace at [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov), the online storefront that consumers can visit to browse and enroll in affordable, comprehensive health insurance plans.

NC navigators can help consumers understand the details of the plans available on [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov), complete the enrollment process and determine their eligibility for financial assistance. Last year, nine in 10 North Carolinians who enrolled in coverage on [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) received financial assistance.

"We want consumers to know that financial assistance is still available," Mark Van Arnem, director of the Consortium, said. "Most North Carolinians who are enrolled in a HealthCare.gov plan get financial help that lowers the monthly cost of their coverage to less than \$70. Navigators can help consumers determine if they are eligible for financial assistance and, if they are, help them sign up to get it."

North Carolinians who are already enrolled in a HealthCare.gov plan will automatically get re-enrolled in 2019 coverage, but navigators are urging consumers to check back in to see if a more suitable plan is available. The average cost of premiums has decreased to \$68 a month, so consumers might be able to find a plan that offers equivalent or better coverage for cheaper.

## Anson County 2040 • Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update

Over the next year Anson County will update its comprehensive land use plan. The county will hold a series of open houses in November and December for residents to provide input on what they value about where they live and what they hope for the future. The content and process will be the same at each open house. Light refreshments and activities for children will be provided. Please attend the open house that is most convenient for you.

Each open house will be open to the public from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Please plan to drop in any time.

For more information contact Anson County Manager Barron Monroe at [BMonroe@co.anson.nc.us](mailto:BMonroe@co.anson.nc.us).

### Open House Schedule

- Thursday, November 14 - Lilesville (East Anson) at the Lilesville Fire Department, 202 West Wall Street in Lilesville.
- Thursday, November 21 - Morven (South Anson) at HOLLA!, 229 Main Street in Morven.
- Thursday, December 5 - Ansonville (North Anson) at the Pee Dee National Wildlife Refuge, 5770 US Highway 52 North, Wadesboro
- Tuesday, December 10 - Polkton (West Anson) at South Piedmont Community College, L.L. Polk Campus, Raye Community Room, 680 US 74 in Polkton
- Thursday, December 12 - Wadesboro (Central Anson) at South Piedmont Community College, Lockhart-Taylor Center's Ingram Room, 514 North Washington Street in Wadesboro

## Blewett Falls Tailrace Fishing Area Closed

Blewett Falls Tailrace Fishing Area is closed to the public due to storm damage received during Hurricane Florence and associated construction activity in the area. A new fishing platform is currently scheduled to open to the public in 2020.

## Anson's Unemployment Rate Dropped to 4.1% in September

Anson County's unemployment rate for September was 4.1%, a significant drop from August's 4.9% rate. Statewide the unemployment rate was a low 3.5% in September, down from August's 4.3% rates.

Anson's total labor force in September was 10,502. Of that number 10,073 were employed and 429 were unemployed. In August the total labor force was 10,402 with 9,895 employed and 507 unemployed.

Ten years ago, in the grips of the recession, Anson County's unemployment rate in September 2009 was 14.8%. In August 2009 the rate was 15.1%. Anson's total labor force in September 2009 was 10,505. Of that number 8,946 were employed and 1,559 were unemployed. In August 2009 the total labor force was 10,527, with 8,936 employed and 1,591 unemployed. Statewide the unemployment rate in September 2009 was 10.4%. What these numbers tell us was that with approximately the same size labor force, ten years ago 1,000 more people were unemployed in Anson County.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in all 100 of North Carolina's counties in September. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 6.2 percent, while Buncombe County had the lowest at 2.6 percent.

All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases. Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount at 4.8 percent had the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 2.7 percent. The September not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 3.5 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in 63 counties, decreased in 23, and remained the same in 14. Six of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases over the year, seven decreased, and two remained the same.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in September by 56,211 to 4,942,117, while those unemployed decreased by 42,527 to 178,221. Since September 2018, the number of workers employed statewide increased 148,574, while those unemployed increased 6,190.

## Several Exhibits at the Ansonville Historical Society Museum this Saturday

The Ansonville Historical Society will be open on Saturday, November 9, from 12 noon until 2 p.m. with several exhibits. Among these exhibits will be Indian artifacts, a depression glass collection, and carved duck decoys.

All are welcome to visit the museum.

The museum is located at 9162 Highway 52 in Ansonville, across from the Ansonville Fire Department. For more information call 704-826-8228

## Christmas in November Sale Returns Saturday

The holiday season is rapidly approaching, but don't panic! On this Saturday, November 9, from 10 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. the Anson County Arts Council's 9th annual Christmas in November Art and Crafts Sale offers the opportunity to find unique gifts while you support area artists and craftsmen. South Piedmont Community College's Lockhart-Taylor Center, located at 514 North Washington Street in Wadesboro, will be filled with wonderful items created by people who live and work right in this area of North Carolina.

You will find holiday and decorative items, wreaths, ornaments, jewelry, pottery, stained glass, wood crafts, Christmas-themed paintings, quilted items, birdhouses and feeders, pine needle baskets, fairy houses, bears, crocheted items, totes, wooden signs, pillows, soaps, lotions, candles and much more offered by talented vendors from Wadesboro, Lilesville, Polkton, Marshville, Monroe, Charlotte, Cheraw, Norwood, Albemarle, Mt. Gilead, Greensboro and surrounding areas.

Christmas in November is a public service project of the Anson County Arts Council for area residents and the creative community. Admission is free, and there is plenty of free parking.

Vendors keep 100% of their sales. If you are an interested vendor, register online at [ansontheatre.com](http://ansontheatre.com) or contact the Arts Council at [ansonart@windstream.net](mailto:ansonart@windstream.net).

The Express is on the web at [www.TheExpressNewspaper.com](http://www.TheExpressNewspaper.com)