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Young Artists Invited to Soar in 2027 North Carolina Aviation Art Contest

Young artists across North Carolina are invited to let their imaginations take flight in the 2027 North Carolina Aviation Art Contest, sponsored by the N.C. Department of Transportation's Division of Aviation. This year's theme, "Forever First in Flight," celebrates North Carolina's historic role in aviation and encourages students to explore the wonders of flight through their artwork.

Since 2013, more than 13,000 students from over 825 North Carolina schools have participated in the annual competition, which combines artistic creativity with an appreciation for aviation.

The contest is open to students born between January 1, 2009, and December 31, 2020. Participants compete in three age divisions: Junior, for those born from 2017 through 2020; Intermediate, for those born from 2013 through 2016; and Senior, for those born from 2009 through 2012.

Winners and their schools will receive cash prizes provided by the North Carolina Airports Association. Unlike previous years, the 2027 competition will be limited to the state level, with no advancement to national or international contests.

For complete contest rules, eligibility requirements and submission instructions, visit www.ncdot.gov. The deadline for entries is Friday, February 19, 2027. All artwork must be received by that date.

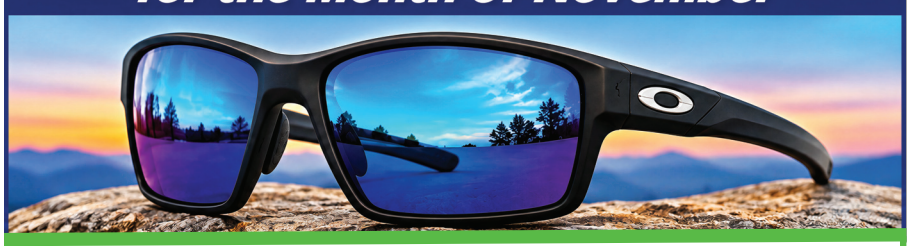
Questions may be directed to the contest coordinator at: *DOT-aviationartcontest@ncdot.gov*.

For young artists who love airplanes, aviation or simply dreaming big, this is an opportunity to put their creativity in the pilot's seat!

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NCDOT Wants to Hear Your Walking, Biking and Rolling Stories

State transportation officials seek public input on plans for safer sidewalks, bike routes and other improvements

Have you ever taken a walk and wondered why the sidewalk suddenly disappeared? Ridden a bicycle and wished there were a safer route? Or found yourself navigating a road that seemed designed exclusively for automobiles? The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) wants to hear about it.

NCDOT is updating its statewide plan for walking, biking and other forms of active transportation, and residents across North Carolina, including Anson County, are invited to share their experiences, stories and photographs. The department's Integrated Mobility Division is collecting personal accounts of walking, bicycling and rolling experiences to help guide future transportation improvements. Selected submissions may even be featured in the final statewide plan.

The updated Statewide Active Transportation Plan will replace WalkBikeNC, which was adopted in 2013. The new plan will guide future partnerships, policies, programs and projects aimed at creating safer, more connected transportation options throughout NC.

A lot has changed since 2013. North Carolina has added more than one million residents, and the state's population is projected to reach 11.7 million by 2030. That's a lot more people sharing the roads, sidewalks and trails, assuming they can find a sidewalk or trail in the first place. The plan could help shape improvements including safer sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, bicycle routes and shared-use paths. Other priorities include better connections to schools, parks, workplaces and public transportation, along with more transportation choices for people who cannot or prefer not to drive.

The initiative also aims to make walking, biking and rolling more accessible to people of all ages and abilities while encouraging physical activity and greater access to nature.

For rural communities such as Anson County, these improvements could be especially meaningful in areas where sidewalks are limited, bicycle routes are scarce and getting from one place to another without a vehicle can be challenging.

Planning began during the summer and is expected to take approximately one year to complete. Residents have until December 5 to submit their stories and photographs.

Submissions can be made online and additional information about the statewide plan is available at: www.ncdot.gov Statewide Active Transportation Plan.

So whether you're a dedicated cyclist, a daily walker, someone who uses a wheelchair or simply a person who would like to cross the street without feeling like you're competing in an obstacle course, NCDOT wants your input.

After all, transportation planning shouldn't just be about getting cars from Point A to Point B. Sometimes it's nice to get there on your own two feet, preferably without having to walk in a ditch.

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SPCC Invites Future Tech Wizards to IT Open House

Explore artificial intelligence, exciting career opportunities and hands-on technology demonstrations

Curious about artificial intelligence? Thinking about a career change? Or just wondering how computers seem to be getting smarter than the rest of us? South Piedmont Community College (SPCC) invites everyone to explore the exciting world of technology at its Information Technology Open House on Tuesday, December 1, from 6 to 8 p.m.

The free event will take place at the Tyson Family Center for Technology, located at 3509 Old Charlotte Highway in Monroe. No technology experience is necessary, just a little curiosity and a willingness to discover something new!

Visitors can explore artificial intelligence, data analytics, digital media and other technology programs through hands-on activities and demonstrations. Faculty members will be available to answer questions about training and career opportunities.

The Charlotte region currently has more than 63,500 technology jobs, with that number projected to exceed 68,500 by 2036. Nearly 2,800 companies are hiring, and the median wage for technology positions exceeds $122,000, making the industry an attractive option for those considering a new career.

The evening will also feature free food and refreshments, SPCC merchandise giveaways, application assistance, financial aid guidance and other student resources.

The open house will be held on the second floor of the Tyson Family Center, with signs and friendly faces helping visitors find their way.

For more information or registration assistance, contact *messenmacher@spcc.edu* or call 704-207-3251. Additional information about the college is available at *www.spcc.edu*.

Whether you're planning your first career or looking for a fresh start, this could be your chance to discover a future in technology. And don't worry, you won't have to compete with a robot for the free food!

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BRLC Welcomes Esther Kinyanjui for Inspiring Testimony Nov. 21

Afternoon of fellowship, lunch, Bingo and a message from Kenya promises inspiration & fun

Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center (BRLC) is inviting the community to an afternoon of fellowship, fun and inspiration on Saturday, November 21, featuring special guest Esther Kinyanjui, who will share her life-changing testimony and experiences from Kenya, Africa.

The center's doors will open at noon, with a light lunch, three games of Ice Breaker Bingo and door prizes beginning at 1 p.m. After everyone has enjoyed some food and friendly competition, Kinyanjui will share her inspiring message at 2 p.m.

Born and raised in Kenya, Kinyanjui remains a citizen of her homeland. She is married to Rev. James Kinyanjui, and the couple shares a vision of helping orphaned children in Kenya.

To make the occasion even more special, BRLC volunteers are encouraging attendees to wear African attire if possible. A group photograph will be taken and sent to Kenya later in November. Don't have African attire? No problem! Just bring yourself, a friend and an open heart.

Attendees are asked to contribute $5 or more to help support the event and the vision of assisting orphaned children in Kenya.

The gathering will take place at BRLC, located at 13349 Highway 742 North, Polkton, across from the Burnsville Fire Department. For more information, call 704-826-8737 or 704-778-7478.

BRLC Director Carol Smith and the center's volunteers encourage everyone to attend, bring friends and enjoy an afternoon that promises good company, a little Bingo excitement and a message worth hearing!