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

Anson County's September Unemployment Rate Dropped to 4.6%

Anson County's unemployment rate for September dropped from August's low 5.3% to 4.6%. Statewide the unemployment rate was 4% in September.

Anson's total labor force in September was 10,507. Of that number 10,023 were employed and 484 were unemployed. In August the total labor force was 10,261 with 9,8716 employed and 545 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in 99 of North Carolina's counties in September and remained unchanged in one. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 6.9 percent, while Buncombe County had the lowest at 3.1 percent. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate decreases.

Among the metro areas, Rocky Mount at 5.8 percent had the highest rate and Asheville had the lowest rate at 3.3 percent. The September not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 4.0 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates decreased all 100 counties. All 15 metro areas experienced rate decreases over the year.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in September by 83,815 to 4,769,398, while those unemployed decreased 20,778 to 197,787. Since September 2016, the number of workers employed statewide increased 109,529, while those unemployed decreased 45,252.

North Carolina's Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)

The Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) gives families a one-time vendor payment to help pay their heating bills. Families must meet all of the following: an income test, be responsible for its heating bills and include a U. S. citizen or an eligible alien.

To apply for the program, the following information is needed: name, date of birth, and social security numbers for each household member; household's income; savings and checking accounts; and property, stocks, bonds, and other assets. Applications will be taken for a household member age 60 and above or disabled person receiving a service through the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS), beginning December 1. All other households may apply beginning January 1. This program will end March 31, unless funds are exhausted.

For more information, contact Anson County Department of Social Services at 704-694-9351.

Farmers Urged to Participate in the Ag Census

Looking around Anson it's obvious that agriculture plays a huge role in our county! Not only are we ranked #16 in cash receipts in North Carolina, we are ranked #9 for turkeys and #10 for broilers out of 100 NC counties. How could I know that? The Ag Census plays a huge part in knowing how we compare to other counties across our state and nation.

Why is that important? There are many reasons to consider. The census provides much needed information and input for ag planning and decision making by the US Department of Agriculture in regard to ag research, conservation programs, new technologies, rural economic development, production practices, telecommunications expansion, transportation and marketing, military veteran farmer programs, and the Farm Bill. The census also gives farmers a voice, telling their story of how they provide food, fuel, fiber and feed to the world.

According to the USDA, "The census is the only source of uniform, comprehensive agricultural data for every state, county, or county equivalent in the nation. By participating in the census you help show the value and importance of U.S. Agriculture."

It's sometimes hard to imagine that commodities grown right here in Anson County might end up on a table across the country, or in other countries. Of course we need to have a voice in decisions that our leaders make about agriculture! So, how can you be a part of making a difference and sharing that voice? Participate in the census, every five years.

Here are some of the FAQs about the Ag Census:

1. What is considered a farm to the census? A farm is any location that produced and sold, or normally would sell, \$1,000 or more of ag products during the census year.
2. Will the information collected be kept confidential? Yes. Results are tallied and available in aggregate form only. No individual operation can be identified in census data collected.
3. How often is the census done? Every five years there is an Ag Census taken. It is a comprehensive count of all US farms and ranches, and all commodities are included.
4. Do I have to respond to the census? If you receive a Census of Ag form in the mail, response is required by law.
5. When will the Census happen? Forms will be mailed in December 2017, and must be completed by the form or online by February 2018. In February 2019 census data will be released by the National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS).
6. Can I respond to the census online? Yes! Visit the following site for online responses to the Census: www.agcounts.usda.gov.
7. Where can I go for general info and questions about the census? Questions can be asked by calling 888-424-7828, or by visiting www.agcensus.usda.gov. More information can be collected at the NC Cooperative Extension - Anson County Center, located at 501 McLaurin Street in Wadesboro.

Christmas Parade is Saturday

The Anson County Chamber of Commerce 2017 Christmas Parade will take place this Saturday, December 2 at 2 p.m. The parade will feature marching bands, homemade floats, antique cars, walking groups and floats. As always, Santa Claus will make his appearance in the Christmas Parade.

The parade route will begin on Morven Road and travel down to turn left on Morgan Street. The next right will be at Washington Street, left on Martin Street, then an immediate left on Greene Street. The parade will continue on Greene Street and disband at the Ray Shelton Ball Field parking lot.



Breast Cancer Awareness Month Observed at Divine Unity Church

Members of Divine Unity Church along with Pastor Sylvia McLendon observed Breast Cancer Awareness Month on Sunday, October 22, 2017.

Christmas Holiday Shows at the Rotary Planetarium

The Wadesboro Rotary Planetarium and Science Center will feature two types of shows during the Christmas season.

Season of Light is a depiction of the various holiday seasons around the world and a celebration of Christmas music.

The Star of Bethlehem is a religious story representing the astronomical and biblical aspect of the star in the east.

Both are videos projected on the 24 foot planetarium dome. Planetarium Director Wendy Eford will also present the winter sky constellations and visible planets during this time.

Since the seating is limited, reservations are necessary by calling 704-694-4417 ext 01005 and leaving your name, date of show you would like to attend, and number of seats to reserve. There is no charge, but donations are welcome to help fund science activities at the planetarium for students.

Here is the schedule of holiday shows:

- Sunday, December 3 at 4 p.m. - *The Star of Bethlehem*
- Monday, December 4 at 5 p.m. - *Season of Light*
- Saturday, December 9 at 1 p.m - *Season of Light*
- Saturday, December 9 at 3 p.m. - *The Star of Bethlehem*
- Monday, December 11 at 6:30 p.m. - *The Star of Bethlehem*
- Monday, December 18 at 10 a.m. *Season of Light*
- Monday, December 18 at 1 p.m. - *The Star of Bethlehem*

During all the holiday shows the Animal Room will be open, as well as the T. D. Burns collection of around 150 rare and beautiful fluorescent minerals from around the world. In this exhibit these mineral specimens become exposed to powerful short and long-wave ultraviolet lamps, and their atoms become energized and emit brilliant visible light in almost every range of the color spectrum. It is a beautiful and fascinating sight.

Lilesville's Christmas in the Park Event is December 12

The Town of Lilesville invites everyone to come to Hatcher Park in Lilesville for the town's annual Christmas in the Park. The event will be held on Tuesday, December 12, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Among the activities will be a tree lighting, singing by the Community Children's Choir, train rides for the kids, face painting, free hot chocolate and cookies, and an opportunity to visit with Santa with pictures. New this year are a horse and buggy ride, a live nativity scene, and food vendors featuring hot dogs, hamburgers, collard sandwiches, hot wings and drinks.

There will be lots of fun for all ages, and a chance to visit with friends.

The Town of Lilesville invites all kids to join their Community Children's Choir. Practice will be held on Thursday, December 7 at 6 p.m. at the Lilesville Community Center, which is located across the street from Hatcher Park. For more information about the choir or anything else call Lilesville Town Hall at 704-848-4711.

Anson County Writers' Club Contest

Deadline to register is Monday, December 4

The Anson County Writers' Club (ACWC) has announced its twenty-eighth Contest in Prose and Poetry. The ACWC will award over \$400 in prize money to the winners of the annual writing contests.

First, second and third place winners in the adult prose and adult poetry categories will receive \$50, \$30 and \$20, respectively. Youth winners (grades 10-12) will receive \$20, \$15 and \$10, respectively. Grades 3-6 and Grades 7-9 will compete separately in the children's division. Prizes are \$15, \$10 and \$5, respectively, for prose and poetry winners in both categories.

All winners will receive a certificate suitable for framing and will be honored at a reception for friends and family on Sunday, February 25, 2018.

Winning entries of the contests will be published in an anthology, Anson Pathways X, which will be released in 2019. Previous issues of Anson Pathways, which has been published every three years since 1991, are available at the Anson County Arts Council.

The adult contests are open to anyone residing in, having resided in, attending school in or working in Anson County; or members of the ACWC. There is a \$1 entry fee that is waived for students at any institution of higher learning.

There is no entry fee for grades 3-12 students. Entries will be accepted from students living in or attending school in Anson County. Rules and entry forms will be provided to all schools.

Deadline for the 2017 contests is 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 4.

A complete copy of the rules and an entry form that must accompany each entry are available at the H.B. Allen Library; the Anson County Chamber of Commerce; or by writing to ACWC 2016 Contests, PO Box 363, Wadesboro, NC 28170 (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope). Rules and entry forms may also be printed from the ACWC website at www.ansoncountywritersclub.org.

The contest committee urges writers to study the contest rules carefully. In past years, some excellent entries that might have won were disqualified because the writers did not follow instructions.

For more information call contest co-chairman Beverley Getzen at 704-694-7022 or Kaye Ratliff at 704-694-5431.

Senior Citizen Christmas Luncheons Are Next Week

Deadline to register is Friday Anson County's Annual Senior Christmas Luncheon will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday December 5 and 6 at the Lockhart-Taylor Center. Because of limited seating capacity the luncheon will be held over two days, serving 250 seniors each day, with festivities beginning at 11 a.m.

A scrumptious meal of turkey, dressing, gravy, pineapple casserole, cranberry sauce, rice, green beans, dessert, roll and tea will be served. There will be fun door prizes, gifts for everyone, entertainment by Terry and Betty Helms, and wonderful fellowship to be enjoyed by all. SHIIP Representatives will be available for information and to schedule appointments.

If you are interested in attending, please call Grace Senior Center at 704-694-6616 to register their preferred day. Registration deadline is December 1.

Zimmer Friends to Meet Friday

The Zimmer Friends group will meet this Friday, December 1 at 1 p.m. at Bojangles Restaurant in Wadesboro. If you or someone in your family worked at Zimmer you are urged to attend and enjoy the fellowship.

For more information call Betty Huneycutt at 704-694-4213.

UWI Movie After the Christmas Parade

Everyone is invited to enjoy an outdoor movie event on the Square in Wadesboro this Saturday, December 2 at 5 p.m. This event takes place after the Christmas Parade that begins at 2 p.m. Uptown Wadesboro, Inc. is hosting the event, and will have popcorn and refreshments for attendees.

After the movie attendees can attend the Anson County Courthouse tree lighting ceremony across the street.

In the event of inclement weather the event will move to the Hampton B. Allen Library.

Breakfast with Santa at Oliver's Restaurant

Uptown Wadesboro, Inc. (UWI) is hosting a Breakfast with Santa event on Saturday, December 9, from 8 to 10 a.m. at Oliver's Restaurant, located at 121 East Wade Street, across from Town Hall. Children, family and friends will enjoy a pancake breakfast and a visit with Santa. Little ones will be able to share their Christmas wish list with the jolly man in red!

The menu will include a choice of plain pancakes or chocolate chip pancakes, maple syrup, bacon, orange juice and coffee.

The cost will be \$6 for adults and \$4 for children 12 and under. Cash only. Tickets will be available at the door.

For more information, contact UWI at 704-695-1644.

Class of 1971 Christmas Fellowship Dinner

The Bowman Senior High School Class of 1971 will have a Christmas Fellowship Dinner at Longhorn Restaurant in Monroe on Saturday, December 9 at 2:00 p.m. Please call Patricia Little at (704) 848-8165 for reservation no later than Thursday, December 7.