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

SPCC and Other Community Colleges to Establish a Regional Collaborative for Global Economy

The presidents of the 10 community colleges in the Charlotte region have reached an agreement to form a new partnership aimed at making the region a hub of global commerce. Called the Regional Collaborative for a Global Economy, the partnership members will seek to lead the region in its economic vision to make the Charlotte region a bigger player on a global scale. Keys to this vision will be producing a workforce capable of meeting the needs of and attracting more global companies and helping businesses of all sizes become more globally competitive.

"This important collaboration will bring together the workforce development partners and other leaders who are best positioned to strengthen and communicate the region's global vision," said South Piedmont Community College President Dr. Stan Sidor. "We will be working together on skills training and the sharing of best practices to ensure that the region continues to offer employers a workforce that is among the world's best."

The ultimate objectives of the collaborative, Sidor said, are greater regional prosperity with more jobs, a globally competitive, job-ready workforce, and greater prominence for the region in terms of global commerce.

Michael Almond, an attorney and former president of the Charlotte Regional Partnership, will serve as the executive director of the regional collaborative. He will work closely with the community colleges, policy makers and economic developers in the region.

"We want to see the Charlotte region gain competitiveness through innovation and entrepreneurship," Almond said. "We have superb community colleges to train the employees needed by globally strategic employers. Working together through the collaborative and partnering with the many stakeholders, we can help our employers expand into global markets while attracting more international companies."

The Regional Collaborative for a Global Economy is one result of the ongoing discussions concerning the establishment of a global economic vision for the region. A series of global competitiveness summits began in 2012, at which regional policy makers and business leaders were invited to consider the region's economic strengths and how to capitalize on them. Three summits have been held thus far, with a fourth set for March 18. From these summits, a global leaders vision group emerged, comprised of approximately 90 community leaders in the corporate, government, business and not-for-profit sectors. The global leaders vision group meets quarterly and has developed a strategic plan to move the region forward in becoming a global hub of commerce.

In addition to South Piedmont, the other colleges forming the Regional Collaborative for a Global Economy are Catawba Valley, Central Piedmont, Cleveland, Gaston College, Mitchell, Northeastern Tech, Rowan-Cabarrus, Stanly and York Tech. The tagline for the collaborative is "Community Colleges Providing Leadership for Global Commerce."

Bertha Watkins Enjoys Her 105th Birthday Party with Family and Friends!



Bertha Watkins celebrated her 105th birthday on December 9. The party was held at Jay's Seafood in Albemarle. Bertha was surrounded by family and friends. Daughter Phyllis Watkins said, "We thank God for her. She is a blessing to her family."

Town of Lilesville to Hold 5th Annual Catfish Stew Cookoff

The Town of Lilesville has issued a challenge to anyone and everyone who cooks catfish stew. Bring it on and find out who the real champion is! There will be a new select panel of judges to make this year's decision. Lilesville will hold their 5th annual Catfish Stew Cookoff on Saturday, March 14. If catfish stew isn't your forte, enter the Stew of Your Choice contest! This event is open to anyone who would like to enter, and everyone is invited to come sample the stews too. Prizes are: • Catfish Stew \$250 to winner, \$100 for 2nd, and \$50 for 3rd • Stew of Your Choice \$100 to winner, \$75 for 2nd, and \$50 for 3rd. Entries judged by patrons.

"We would like to invite all cooks who enjoy a challenge," said Lilesville Town Clerk Lynn Whitlock. "Come join us and let's find out who is really the best, because we are going to crown a champion!"

If you're not cooking, you can join the fun and root for your favorite team. You can also try your hand at being a judge, for \$5, pick up a bowl and spoon and get a taste of each entry and compare your selection with that of the official judges.

Once again there will also be the crowning of Miss Catfish and Master Catfish. This contest is open to two age groups - girls and boys from Kindergarten through 3rd grade (winner has best colored picture of a catfish using outline provided by town hall), and girls and boys from 4th through 6th grade for best colored picture of an original drawing of a catfish. Rules and entry forms are available at town hall.

If you would like to be a vendor or set up a booth, contact town hall at 704-848-4711 by the March 9 deadline.

This event will take place at Hatcher Park from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The judging will take place from 1 to 2 p.m. To enter the cookoff you can pick up forms at Lilesville Town Hall, Scotty's Bait and Tackle, Whit's Convenience at all 3 locations, and the Old Store. There is no cost to enter, the deadline is March 11.

The Town of Lilesville plans to have lots of fun on Saturday, March 14. Don't mess around and miss this fun-filled event. You will definitely be sorry you did. Lilesville wants YOU to cook up some STEW!
By Melanie Lyon



Anson County Early College Super Seniors Enjoy Trip to New York City

On December 14-17 seven Super Seniors from Anson County Early College, along with four chaperones, traveled to New York City. The purpose of the trip was to expose students to different cultures and ways of life.

While there the group visited many historical sites: the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, the Museum of Natural History and the 911 Memorial. They took a bus ride around the city where a licensed guide provided them with the history of Manhattan. They also explored Central Park, 5th Avenue and Times Square just to name a few.

This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for the students made possible by Cliff Martin, Jr.

The picture was taken on Ellis Island in front of the Statue of Liberty, with a view of lower Manhattan in the background. Pictured from left are Colton Snodgrass, Zachary Gardner, Baonhia Vang, Jacob King, Amber Morton, Lindsay Haire and Tracey Brewer.

Anson Environmental Group Urges Community Veto on Coal Ash, Fracking, and Other Toxic Natural Gas Facilities

In a release from Pee Dee W.A.L.L.: Pee Dee W.A.L.L., a non-profit group of concerned citizens from Anson County, unified in a three state campaign along with community groups in Virginia, Georgia and North Carolina. At a press conference event held February 12 in front of the Anson County Courthouse, Pee Dee WALL and its supporters called for a community veto on current state proposals to bring the controversial fracking for natural gas to Anson County and the dumping of coal ash at the Waste Connection Landfill in Polkton.

Pastor Cary Rodgers from Pathway to Peace Ministries in Anson County and community organizer for Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, in his speech during the press conference said, "This community veto is a call for all our citizens to stand up to protect our rights, lives, water, air, and land. A veto is our constitutional right to reject a decision or proposal made by a law-making body. We veto the state's plans to allow fracking to pollute our water, air and harm our lives. The state has no right to over ride our county's five year moratorium on fracking."

Pastor Rodgers also mentioned that Anson County Waste Connection Landfill in Polkton is an alternative dumping site for Duke Energy's Coal Ash. "There have been reports related to coal ash and its harmful effects on human health and the environment. Duke Energy wants to dump their coal ash mess and liability on us. We also veto Duke Energy with the state's permission to dump their coal ash mess and liability on us! All landfills leak. This coal ash mess is a disaster," said Pastor Rodgers.

Standing behind a banner with an American flag and eagle as it's backdrop with the words "Safeguard America's Resources," Pastor Rodgers reminded those in attendance that America is special - blessed by God, and we still have freedom to speak up against the forces that threaten our rights and health. He urged all Anson county citizens to get involved in these vital issues.

For more info on how you can help call 704-465-8504 or roddersoc01@yahoo.com. Pee Dee W.A.L.L. along with the others who were part of the multi-state campaign event are chapters of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL). They have over thirty years experience of empowering communities to protect their environment, lives, and rights. To learn more go to www.bredl.org.

Anson High School Drama Club Presents Comedies at the Ansonia this Weekend

The Anson High School Drama Club is presenting two hilarious comedies at the Ansonia Theatre this weekend, on Friday and Saturday February 20 and 21. The productions begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5.

Leading the cast of *Bad Auditions* by *Bad Actors* is Alynda Pratt as a casting director who has one day to find the leads for a community theater production of *Romeo and Juliet*. But what seems like a simple task proves impossible when the pool of actors includes extreme method actors, performers who just don't know what to do with their hands, and one particular woman who may or may not think she's a cat. This hilarious comedy will bring you to the last place you'd ever want to be...behind the doors of a casting session. Cast members include Jalen Little, Teely Yang, Triston Mullis, Vince Gilmore, Jonathan Treadaway, Victoria Hunter, Erin Thomas, Riki Dows, Malia Gaddy, Gage Tarlton, Brian Delp, Max Martin and Hannah Knotts.

Leading the cast of *Romeo to Go* is Madi Martin as teacher Mrs. Gunnysack who informs her students that due to budget cuts there will only be a single session of Drama One for the entire school year -- and the class will only last 20 minutes. To make matters worse, the students are required to perform an entire Shakespeare play for a schoolwide assembly during a time slot of only 10 minutes. Under the direction of the egomaniacal Mrs. Gunnysack, the beginner students must pull together for the fastest, cleanest, lowest-budget rendition of *Romeo and Juliet*, the world has ever seen, complete with a makeshift balcony, interpretive dance fight sequences, and an Elizabethan hip-hop dance party. Cast members include Destiny Dows, Erin Thomas, Riki Dows, Vince Gilmore, Brian Delp, Max Martin, Victoria Hunter, Triston Mullis, Gage Tarlton, Rachael Meachum, Miranda Curran, Jalen Little, Malia Gaddy, Hannah Knotts, Jonathan Treadaway, Alynda Pratt, Teely Yang and Destiny Cole. The students are under the direction of Liz Rockett.



BCSWCD Board Meeting is February 24

The Brown Creek Soil & Water Conservation District monthly board meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 24 at 10 a.m. at the BCSWCD office located at 1758 Morven Road in Wadesboro. For more information call 704-694-3516.

Music of the 1920s to 1940s Presented at the Ansonia

In a release from the Arts Council: The Ansonia Theatre is proud to present Sentimental Journey on February 22 at 3:30 p.m. Singer and cabaret artist Lisa Rock has graced stages all over the country. Now she celebrates the 60-year love affair of her grandparents through the music of the 1920s, '30s and '40s in her cabaret show Sentimental Journey. This is the soundtrack they fell in love to, that helped them endure being apart during the war and underscored the rest of their lives together.

Rock's voice and stage presence are magnetic, bringing the audience into the songs as she sings her heart out. Join Lisa, Chicago singer Amy Malouf, and accompanist Micky York on a Sentimental Journey with classic songs such as *Moon River*, *Over the Rainbow* and *Happy Days are Here Again*. You'll love the music and you'll laugh at the stories as Lisa takes you on a sentimental journey you won't soon forget. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at Lacy's or at the Anson County Arts Council at 704-694-4950.

Free Movie is When the Game Stands Tall

Hampton B. Allen Library will be showing the movie *When the Game Stands Tall* in the Little Theatre on Monday, February 23 at 10 a.m. The movie is based on the true story of legendary football coach Bob Ladouceur who took the De La Salle High School Spartans from obscurity to a 151-game winning streak. The movie stars Jim Caviezel, Alexander Ludwig, Michael Liklis and Laura Dern. It is rated PG. Everyone is invited to come and enjoy this great free movie. For more information call 704-694-5177.

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