

Castle Bridge Repairs Underway...Traffic to flow at all hours

ASHEVILLE, NC (January 17, 2019) -- A transportation plan to continue serving citizens in Burke and Caldwell counties has been put in to action on the Castle Bridge.

A contractor for the N.C. Department of Transportation started repairing the 57-year-old bridge over the Catawba River last week in order to extend its life until a new parallel bridge can be constructed.

"The goal of making these temporary repairs is to keep the existing bridge open at all times for local residents," Division 13 Resident Engineer Nathan Moneyham said. "These repairs will serve the citizens in the short term while the new bridge will serve everybody for decades to come."

NCDOT engineers and local officials chose to make the short-terms repairs in order to design and develop a new bridge. Original plans consisted of making structural repairs to the existing bridge that would last about 15 years but would require a 30-minute detour for more than a year.



Engineers and officials found a better solution as a result of multiple public meetings and addressing the concerns of local leaders and community business owners. A contract for the new bridge is scheduled to be awarded in 2024.

The contract to repair and paint structural steel with Astron General Contracting is worth \$488,000 and includes specific restrictions to limit interruptions to local traffic. Lanes may not be closed between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m., and the bridge should not be completely closed at any time. Some nighttime lane closures may restrict traffic to one lane. The work should be completed by July to accommodate the average of 9,000 vehicles per day.

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The content of the articles or the advertisements does not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone affiliated with the Caldwell Journal. The Caldwell Journal is a non-discriminatory paper.

**Our Deadline Is On Friday At 5pm
 For Next Week's Paper**

Caldwell Journal

Caldwell Journal Weather

Thursday (24th): Mostly cloudy; milder.
 High 51 Low 28
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

Friday (25th): Mostly sunny.
 High 42 Low 16
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

Saturday (26th): Times of clouds & sun.
 High 44 Low 26
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

Sunday (27th): Mostly cloudy.
 High 49 Low 29
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

Monday (28th): Clouds & sun.
 High 52 Low 33
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

Tuesday (29th): Turning cloudy.
 High 48 Low 19
 Precipitation: 0.02 in.

Wednesday (30th): A chance for snow or flurries.
 High 40 Low 22
 Precipitation: 0.00 in.

DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) meeting set for January 23

LENIOR, NC (January 22, 2019) -- Caldwell Heritage Museum will host an upcoming event for anyone interested in joining the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution.) Even if you aren't sure, please come to the February information meeting. We are looking to get a new chapter started. These opportunities are great ways to network with others seeking their Patriot, make new friends and strengthen relationships.

Anne Hobbs, Organizing Secretary with the NCS DAR, will be at the museum on the following dates to meet with interested parties. Even if you aren't sure you have a Patriot, stop by. There several ways to become a member.

Saturday, 23 February @ 11:00 for an informational / interest meeting for anyone interested in the process, ask questions, etc. Please attend and invite your friends, family members and let's fill the house.

Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry Kicks Off 50th Anniversary with Recommitment Celebration

HICKORY, NC (January 23, 2019) -- The Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry (31 1st Avenue SE - Hickory) is hosting a Recommitment Celebration on February 1, 2019 at 1:00 PM. The community is invited to attend; there will be a brief program featuring a Proclamation by Hickory Mayor Hank Guess. Cake and refreshments will also be provided.

"GHCCM is honored to celebrate 50 years of serving our community. We are thankful for the churches who collaborated to form our ministry in 1969 and we are grateful for our generous supporters and community partners who stand with us today. GHCCM looks forward to many years of continued service and a future filled with lives changed." said Jason Rogers, Director of Development at the Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministry.

Tuesday, February 5 -- Representatives from Bark Mobile/Carolina West will be at the Senior Center to teach a FREE smartphone clinic on Feb. 5th at 10:00am. Bring your smartphone and questions to learn how to make the most out of using your phone. A follow-up class for those that participate will be held Feb. 15th at 1:00pm. Please call to register at 758-2883. Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Tuesday, February 5 -- Ask an Attorney! Attorneys with Heritage Law will be at the Senior Center on Feb. 5th at 3:30pm for a FREE program to answer questions about estate planning documents, Medicaid programs that help pay for long term care and any questions you may have at the meeting. Please register at 758-2883. You may submit any questions when you call. Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Man dies after accidentally shooting himself...authorities investigating incident

GRANITE FALLS, NC (January 17, 2019) -- On Wednesday, January 16, 2019 at approximately 9:05pm the Caldwell County 911 Communications Center received a 911 call reporting that someone was shot at 114 Falls Avenue, Apt 1, Granite Falls, NC. Officers responded to the scene and found Cal Culver Bills, white male, age 29 suffering from a gunshot wound. Caldwell County Emergency Services pronounced Bill's dead at the scene.

Ricki Ryder Smith, white female, age 23 called 911 reporting the incident. Smith and Bills were together in the apartment at the time of the incident. Smith reported that Bill's shot himself accidentally.

The Granite Falls Police Department and the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation are investigating the incident. The Granite Falls Police Department responded with Emergency Services. The location of the incident was at the Granite Village Apartments.

Lenoir woman charged with felony trafficking

LENOIR, NC (January 18, 2019) -- Sheriff Alan C. Jones has announced on January 17, 2019, Narcotic Agents and SWAT with the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office executed a drug search warrant 2465 Collettsville Road in Lenoir. The suspect and tenant, Angela Dawn Walsh, age 40, was present and taken into custody without incident. Walsh has been under investigation by the Ice Unit for suspicion of methamphetamine distribution for some time. After conducting several undercover purchases of methamphetamine out of the residence, Agents were able to secure a search warrant for the premise.

Agents searched the residence and located a little over an ounce of methamphetamine, digital weighing scales, and a small amount of marijuana from the residence. The methamphetamine has a street value of \$4,320 according to North Carolina State Drug Guidelines.

Walsh was charged with one count of felony trafficking in methamphetamine. She was incarcerated in the Caldwell County Detention Center under a \$7,500 secured bond on the charges and has a first appearance in District Court in Lenoir on January 22, 2019.

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is always in search of any information involving the use and distribution of illegal controlled substances. A concerned citizen's information and assistance will be kept confidential. If you have any information concerning illegal drug activity in Caldwell County, please contact the:

CCSO I.C.E. Unit at 828-757-1178.
LPD's Narcotics Division at 828-757-2145.
Hudson Police Department at 828-728-5021.
Granite Falls Police Department at 828-396-3358.
Caldwell County Crimestoppers at 828-758-8300.

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Caldwell Journal Weekly Recipe

Instant Pot Black Beans & Rice With Avocado Salsa

Ingredients

The Rice And Beans

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1/2 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp chili powder
- 1 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- 3/4 tsp kosher salt
- 3 cups low sodium vegetable broth
- 3 cups water
- 1 1/2 cup dried black beans, rinsed & stones picked out
- 1 1/2 cup short grain brown rice
- Juice of 1/2 lime
- Salt and pepper, to taste

The Salsa

- 2 California avocados, chopped
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 3 tbsp minced cilantro
- 2 tbsp minced jalapeno pepper, seeds removed
- 1/4 tsp kosher salt

Instructions

The Rice And Beans:

1. Set the Instant Pot to Saute mode and add the olive oil.
2. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until starting to soften, about 3 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, cumin, chili powder, paprika, oregano and salt.
4. Cook for 30 seconds. Turn off the Instant Pot.
5. Pour in the vegetable broth, water, dried black beans and rice, and stir.
6. Put the lid on the Instant Pot, close the steam vent and set to HIGH pressure using the Manual mode. Adjust the time to 30 minutes. The Instant Pot will take approximately 15 minutes to come to pressure.
7. Let the pressure release naturally for 10 minutes, then release the pressure the rest of the way.
8. Squeeze in the the lime juice, fluff the rice and beans with a fork and season to taste. Serve with the avocado salsa.

The Salsa:

While the rice and beans are cooking, stir together the avocado, lime juice, tomato, cilantro, jalapeno and salt.



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Caldwell County – Winners of Exposures Photography Competition announced

LENOIR, NC (January 14, 2019) -- The Caldwell Arts Council is pleased to announce the winners of the Exposures Photography Competition. Thirty-five photographers presented 67 photos for this competition. The exhibit will remain on display through January 26, 2019.

Juror: Joe Young is an award-winning photographer with a background in photojournalism. He is the Senior Professor for the Photographic Technology program at Catawba Valley Community College in Hickory, NC.

Best of Show – “Magnolia” by Jack Daulton

First Place Straight Photography – “Dahlia Dance” by Ron Schwartz

First Place Enhanced Photography – “I’m Going Out of My Head” by Steve West

People’s Choice – “Red Barn Snow Storm” by Mike Koenig

Honorable Mention Awards were presented for the following images:

“Change-Up” by Lisa Martinat

“Pinola” by John Rabb

“Flowing Cascades” by Tonya Wright

“Red Maple Scanography” by Robert Phipps

“Balance” by David DeBaeremaeker

“Sally Lacy” by Cindy Kilgore

“Boone Fork Creek” by Ron Schwartz

“Edenton Fog” by Denise Lindsay

“Autumn’s Bridge to Heaven” by Mike Koenig

“Shadow and Guitar” by Debbie DeBaeremaeker

“Lost Pier” by Douglas Terry

“Cypress and Cattails” by Robert Phipps

About the Caldwell Arts Council:

The Caldwell Arts Council’s mission is to establish and maintain an awareness and appreciation of cultural arts in Caldwell County, to encourage participation in art events, and to offer various educational opportunities and administrative services in support of artists, arts agencies, and audiences. Located at 601 College Ave SW in Lenoir, operating hours are Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday 10am-2pm – free to the public. For more information, call 828-754-2486 or visit www.caldwellarts.com

CCC&TI Will Launch Human Services Technology Program in Fall 2019

HUDSON, NC (January 18, 2019) -- To meet the needs of local health care providers, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute (CCC&TI) has added two new degree programs that will train social and human services assistants, as well as mental health professionals.

Beginning in Fall 2019, CCC&TI’s Caldwell Campus in Hudson will offer 2-year Associate in Applied Science degrees in Human Services Technology and Human Services Technology with a concentration in Mental Health. Approved by the CCC&TI Board of Trustees on Jan. 16, the programs prepare students for entry-level positions in institutions and agencies that provide social, community and educational services, as well as at mental health treatment centers.

Driving the addition of the programs is a growing demand for human services and mental health workers, CCC&TI President Dr. Mark Poarch said. Specifically, Caldwell UNC Healthcare’s new mental health facility in Lenoir and Appalachian Regional Healthcare in the High Country need workers in these areas, Poarch said.

“This is a direct response from us to meet the needs of our local industry,” Poarch said. “I feel really good about what we’re doing to support our community with these programs.”

CCC&TI is now taking applications for the Human Services Technology programs with the first classes beginning in August 2019. For more information about the program or to apply, please contact Amy Huffman at 828-726-2710.

Friday, February 1 -- VAYA Health’s Geriatric and Adult Mental Health Specialty Team will host a FREE seminar on “PTSD: Invisible Scars” and “Commonly Misused Medications: Understanding Medication Effects on the Aging Brain” at the Satie & J.E. Broyhill Caldwell Senior Center from 10:00am-12:00 noon. Community individuals, agency staff serving older adults, caregivers and anyone interested in learning about this topic are encouraged to attend. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Senior Center is a United Way of Caldwell County Agency.

Friday, February 1 -- McCreary Cancer Center’s Medical Oncologist, Dr. James Hathorn, will give a FREE program at the senior center about different types of cancer, treatment options and services that are available on Feb. 1st from 1:00-2:00 PM. Please register at 758-2883. Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency.

Monday, February 4 -- Powerful Tools for Caregivers is a FREE 6-week program for caregivers who need emotional support. You will develop many self-care tools to: reduce stress, reduce negative self-talk and communicate with family. Each participant receives a FREE copy of The Caregiver Helpbook. Join Mary Mitchell, Family Caregiver Specialist and Karen Phoenix, Project CARE Family Consultant with WPCOG for this informative program Feb. 4th-Mar. 11th at 3:00pm at the Senior Center. You must register at 758-2883 as space is limited. Caldwell Senior Center is a United Way participating agency. Please register at (828) 758-2883. The Senior Center is a United Way of Caldwell County Agency.

What's so Special about Special Enrollment, Part 2?

LENOIR, NC (January 17, 2019) -- Annual Enrollment is over. I'm talking the ACA (Affordable Care Act) Individual Health Annual Enrollment (AEP).

So, what does that mean? It means you cannot buy Individual Health insurance until the next AEP begins probably in November of this year. The exception to that is a Special Enrollment situation. What's that?

Special Enrollment Period (SEP) is when you qualify for ACA Individual Health coverage during the year when it is not AEP. Special Enrollment situations can be: 1) loss of employer coverage, 2) moving, 3) loss of Medicaid, 4) having a baby, 5) getting married, 6) getting divorced, 7) going off COBRA, 8) turning 26 and going off a parent's plan, etc. You do have to prove (with the help of your insurance agent) that you are in the SEP situation you claim before the Marketplace will release your application to the insurance company.

Do I have to have insurance? Isn't the mandate to have it now removed in most states including North Carolina?

No and Yes. However, if you find yourself in a high dollar claim situation you mostly likely are going to want insurance so you have access to the best possible care.

What about these cheaper health insurance advertisements I see on TV, in magazines or on the internet? For one, those are not major medical unlimited coverage ACA plans. There are only two carriers in North Carolina offering major medical. In our area, there's only one. If you look closely at the fine print you will see they are limited coverage plans (Short Term Health, Hospital Indemnity, Critical Illness) which can be okay unless you have extensive claims, have pre-existing medical conditions or have a catastrophic medical issue. Those are truly designed for interim coverage such as changing jobs, graduating from college and starting a new job, retiring and waiting to go on a Medigap type plan, etc.

If I'm in a Special Enrollment situation, why shouldn't I just go without insurance and/or take COBRA? Ultimately, you have to do what's best for you. If you examine one major catastrophic claims situation you will find that going without coverage will probably cost, you way more than saving on monthly premium insurance plan payments not to mention it may limit the care you can get for any problem you may have. With COBRA it isn't so much the kind of coverage you have as it is the expense. You can get a quote for ACA Special Enrollment Individual Health to see what your cost and coverage would be if you go this route.

Whatever you do, your coverage choices are up to you! Check with your local insurance agency that offers ACA Special Enrollment Individual Health for more information.

Bush and Associates has been offering ACA Individual Health and ACA Special Enrollment Individual Health since it became available in 2013. They have already made the Elite Circle of Champions with Healthcare.gov for 2019. Get in touch with them today for more information by calling (828) 754-2601, emailing quotes@bushandassociates.net or visiting their office at 916 Wilkesboro Blvd. in Lenoir. You can also visit their website at <http://www.mynchealthplan.com>

~Laura Sedlacek is an Agent with Bush and Associates insurance. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business from Lenoir-Rhyne.

State Champions and National Medalists for SCHS Agronomy Team

LENOIR, NC (January 16, 2019) -- At the national Future Farmers of America (FFA) Convention and Expo in Indianapolis this fall, four young men serving as the North Carolina Champion Agronomy Team, proudly represented their state, the Caldwell County School System and South Caldwell High School in competition as winners of the team Silver rating and finishing 19th in the nation.

The National FFA Agronomy Career Development event recognized individual and team scores.

Ben Kohnle, agricultural education teacher at South Caldwell for 13 years and team sponsor, is teacher, coach and supporter of this winning team.

Congratulations to the outstanding performances of the South Caldwell High Agronomy team members:

Thomas Joplin, 11th grade: Bronze Medalist

Corey Reid, 12th grade: Silver Medalist

Koby Hilton, 12th grade: Silver Medalist

Lawton Looper, 12th grade: Gold Medalist

This is the first year that South Caldwell High School entered an agronomy team into competition, and they won the FFA North Carolina Champion title, USA Silver rating and finished 19th in the nation!



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Lenoir man faces two drug related felony charges

LENOIR, NC (January 18, 2019) -- Sheriff Alan C. Jones has announced on January 17, 2019, Narcotic Agents with the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office and Lenoir Police Department, along with Sheriff's Office SWAT executed a drug search warrant at 1239 Old North Road in Lenoir. The suspect, Dennis Blaine Robinson, age 59, was present and taken into custody without incident. Robinson had been under investigation for several months for suspicion of trafficking large amounts of methamphetamine. The search warrant was issued after agents gathered intelligence through interviews and conducted several undercover purchases of methamphetamine from the suspect's residence.

As a result of the investigation, agents located and seized approximately 383 grams of methamphetamine, digital weighing scales, an assault rifle, a pistol, two shotguns, one ounce of high grade marijuana and \$3,000 cash from the residence. The methamphetamine has a street value of \$57,525 according to North Carolina State Drug Guidelines.

Robinson was charged with one count of felony trafficking in methamphetamine by possession and one count felony maintain a dwelling to keep/store a controlled substance. He was incarcerated in the Caldwell County Detention Center under a \$25,000 secured bond on the charges and has a first appearance in District Court in Lenoir on January 23, 2019. If convicted, he faces a mandatory prison sentence.

“This was excellent work by all agencies involved with this investigation. We have taken down a major supplier” –Sheriff Alan C. Jones

The Caldwell County Sheriff's Office is always in search of any information involving the use and distribution of illegal controlled substances. A concerned citizen's information and assistance will be kept confidential. If you have any information concerning illegal drug activity in Caldwell County, please contact the:

CCSO I.C.E. Unit at 828-757-1178.

LPD's Narcotics Division at 828-757-2145.

Hudson Police Department at 828-728-5021.

Granite Falls Police Department at 828-396-3358.

Caldwell County Crimestoppers at 828-758-8300.

Scholarships Available to Area Horticulture Students

LENOIR, NC (January 22, 2019 by Tina Lovejoy - Caldwell County Extension Administrative Assistant) -- The Caldwell County Nursery Association will award \$500 scholarships to deserving students enrolling in a horticulture program at a North Carolina college during the 2019-2020 term. The scholarship is open to any student from the counties of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, McDowell, or Wilkes. Interested students should fill out the application. Applications must be postmarked by March 30, 2019.

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Valmead Fire Rescue receives grant money that will allow them to better serve their community

LENOIR, NC (January 18, 2019) -- Valmead Fire Rescue received a \$158,456 check signed by Congressman Mark Meadows for a FEMA S.A.F.E.R. grant.

These funds will be distributed to the department over a 4-year period to assist in adequate staffing through a call reimbursement program, training incentive program and much needed turnout gear. This grant will allow the men and women of Valmead Fire Rescue to better serve their community through an increased number of certified firefighters, more training and protective fire gear.

Each year, Valmead Fire Rescue responds to approximately 400 calls ranging from medical calls to structure fires and vehicle accidents.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer and learning lifesaving skills while having fun, stop by the station on Monday nights around 7pm to learn more. Come out and make a difference in our community and the lives around you!



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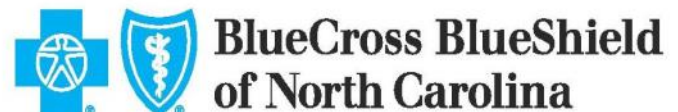
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Open enrollment for student transfers

LENOIR, NC (January 16, 2019) -- Students have a choice either to enroll in the school that serves their home district or to apply for an approved transfer at an open school. If they choose to transfer, the Open Enrollment period is Jan. 15 until Feb. 28.

Packets of information have been sent home with students and any student who is interested in transferring to a school, simply completes a one-page application, obtains signatures from principals (necessary for new transfers and kindergarten students), meets conditions specified in board policy, and submits the application by Feb. 28.

At the Jan. 14 Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Dr. Donald Phipps recommended revisions to school board policy 4150 School Assignments.

"We've revised the process to improve the overall effectiveness of student assignments," said Phipps. "We encourage any student currently on an approved transfer or any student who would like to transfer, to complete the form by the deadline. Once the Open Enrollment closes, parents must show severe, extenuating circumstances to justify a student transfer."

Changes to the policy will provide the district with accurate data on the number of students currently enrolled out of their home school district and by designating an Open Enrollment period early in the calendar year, the school district can more precisely determine the number of teachers that are needed in each school the following year.

The district recently conducted a capacity study of each of the school facilities. Any school reaching a 90% capacity will be designated as a closed school. During this Open Enrollment period, only three schools are closed to student transfers: Davenport A+ School, Lower Creek Elementary and William Lenoir Middle. All other schools are open to accepting approved student transfers.

Student transfer forms are posted online at caldwellschools.com.

\$750.00 Scholarship Offered to Business Students

LENOIR, NC (January 22, 2019 by Tina Lovejoy - Caldwell County Extension Administrative Assistant) -- Nominations are being sought for a \$750 scholarship offered by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Administrative Professionals Association (NCCEAPA). The scholarship is available to North Carolina residents pursuing a college degree (Associates and/or Bachelors) in business or a business-related field of study. Applicants must be enrolled to attend classes at a college during the 2019-2020 school year.

The scholarship is awarded annually to honor the work and dedication of Edith Herter and Frances O'Neal, co-leaders in forming the NCCEAPA in 1973.

Qualified applicants interested in applying for this scholarship can obtain an application packet from the financial aid office at their local community college or click below. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, Caldwell County Center, at 828.757.1290, or by visiting the Center at 120 Hospital Ave, NE Suite 1, Lenoir NC 28645.

Deadline to apply is March 22, 2019.

Tweetsie Railroad to Hold Auditions for 2019 Season

BLOWING ROCK, NC (January 23, 2019) -- If you want a great summer job, and love to sing, dance and act, or have theater tech skills, mark Saturday, January 26th or February 2nd, on your calendar. That's the date when local auditions and interviews for employment will be conducted for the 2019 season at Tweetsie Railroad's Wild West Adventure theme park.

Tweetsie's Entertainment Department will be scouting for musical theater performers, as well as audio/video staff. Singers, technicians, actors, Cloggers and dancers are all welcome to these auditions, including those with stage combat and equestrian skills.

Applicants should apply online (www.tweetsie.com/employment/application/) or pick an up application at the Ticket Office. Registration will be on-site. Actors, singers/dancers and technicians will register between 9:00 am and 10:00 am. Applicants must be 16 years or older to audition.

Tweetsie Railroad will be open weekends starting April 5th, and seven days a week from May 24th – August 25th before returning to the weekend schedule from September through October 27th. The parks regular hours are 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, and nightly during Ghost Train®.

Applicants can submit their application and a video audition to Tweetsie Railroad, 300 Tweetsie Railroad Lane, Blowing Rock, NC 28605 or email: shows@tweetsie.com. Video auditions should include a monologue (one minute or less), an accompanied song (12-24 bars; no a cappella signing), and video clips from a show that demonstrates your dance and/or movement skills.