

US Appeals Court rules in NC voting rights case, says maps must be used in Nov. election

Ryan Shaffer

March 29, 2024

In a 2-1 vote at the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, judges say it's too late to change maps ahead of the 2024 election.

New Bern-based plastic parts manufacturer to layoff up to 120 workers

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 29, 2024

Located at the Craven County Industrial Park, the Wirthwein New Bern Corp. has notified the state of anticipated layoffs.

State officials to revoke license of wilderness camp after 12-year-old's death

Ryan Shaffer

March 29, 2024

State officials have levied an \$18,000 fine and a criminal investigation is ongoing.

GOP Sen. Tillis criticizes Trump over comments calling Jan. 6 rioters 'patriots'

Ryan Shaffer

March 29, 2024

Sen. Thom Tillis joins two other GOP Senators in criticizing Trump over his recent comments.

Dare County encouraging homeowners near Buxton beach with wells to get water tested

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 28, 2024

The Cape Hatteras National Seashore closed the Buxton Beach Access and an additional stretch of beach because of petroleum odors and sheen on the ocean water.

Loud bangs and explosions heard in the in the Scuffleton area are the sounds of cinema and commerce

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 28, 2024

Greene County officials say people there and in surrounding counties may hear explosives, fireworks and cannons noises as part of a film production that is taking place in the Scuffleton area.

Tent city on private property in Goldsboro to be cleared out, 28 people told to leave

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 28, 2024

Goldsboro police visited the "Tent City" on Tuesday to notify occupants that they trespassing on the private property in the woods between Target and the railroad tracks on Royall Ave.

NC AG issues call-to-action on fentanyl crisis

Nick de la Canal, WFAE

March 28, 2024

He said nearly 3,400 North Carolinians lost their lives in fentanyl-related overdoses last year -- or more than nine every day -- and issued a call-to-action.

Cooper continues to call for a moratorium on North Carolina's private-school voucher expansion

Ann Doss Helms, WFAE

March 28, 2024

The two-term Democratic governor is putting in a lot of energy in his final year in office arguing that the General Assembly's expansion of Opportunity Scholarships undermines public schools.

Duke survey: CFO's more optimistic but remain concerned about the job market and monetary policy

Bradley George

, March 28, 2024

That's according to a survey of Chief Financial Officers conducted by Duke University's Fuqua business school and Federal Reserve Banks in Richmond and Atlanta.

New NCA&T project will connect North Carolina's small farms

Sharryse Piggott, WUNC

March 28, 2024

The CROPS [crops] project is funded by a \$1-million grant from the National Science Foundation's Regional Innovation Engines program, which provides funds for research in non-medical fields. CROPS stands for Climate, Responsive Opportunities in Plant Science.

State health department reaching out to veterans who may qualify for food assistance

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 28, 2024

About 14,000 North Carolina veterans and their families are likely eligible for the state's newly expanded Medicaid benefits, and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is now working to get the word out that they may also qualify for Food and Nutrition Services (also known as food stamps or SNAP.)

Plans for New Bern health clinic near downtown move forward

Ryan Shaffer

March 27, 2024

Located between the new and old Stanley White Recreation Center, the Redevelopment Commission has been in talks with CarolinaEast Health Systems to build and operate a clinic in the Duffyfield Area.

Could the rumors be true? Possible moonshine cave found under stands at North Wilkesboro Speedway

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

During an inspection last week, operations staff discovered cracks in the original concrete in section N and started removing seats to inspect the extent of the damage and evaluate needs for repair, and an open area of approximately 700-square-feet was discovered underneath the aging concrete.

N.C. Hwy. 12 on Ocracoke Island will remain closed until Saturday

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

The N.C. Department of Transportation says major ocean overwash is still occurring and another low pressure system forecast to arrive Wednesday.

Beach driving suspended as Emerald Isle dredging, beach renourishment project wraps up

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

Contractors are now removing the equipment used to take the accumulated sand out of Bogue Sound – which means a temporary beach driving ban for safety reasons.

MCAS Cherry Point conducting mass casualty training exercise next month

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

The exercise will include a simulated aircraft mishap and mass casualty incident, and the execution of the base's mass casualty plan for the rescue, triage, treatment, and transportation of military personnel and bystanders.

N.C. Congressman introduces bill to ban race-based mandates at medical schools

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

Congressman Greg Murphy introduced the 'EDUCATE Act', the Embracing Anti-Discrimination, Unbiased Curricula, and Advancing Truth in Education Act, last week.

State Board of Elections voted unanimously to certify counts from the March 5th primary

Kelly Batchelor

March 27, 2024

North Carolina's primary election results earlier this month have been made official, with a handful of key incumbents losing and a few U.S. House and statewide nominee races heading to runoffs.

North Carolina the final stop on President Bidens's tour of battleground states

Sascha Cordner

March 27, 2024

President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris stopped in Raleigh Tuesday to promote the administration's health care agenda.

Spill sends 1,500 gallons of sewage into a creek that flows into Bogue Sound

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

City officials say about 1,500 gallons was discharged into Peletier Creek in the Bogue Sound. They say discharge was caused by underground roots that damaged the pipes.

Officials say disaster like the ship strike and bridge collapse in Baltimore is unlikely at North Carolina's deep-water ports

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 27, 2024

Officials say commercial ships do not need to navigate under bridges to access either of North Carolina's deep-water ports.

NC Coastal Land Trust looks to preserve 150 acres of Topsail Island

Ryan Shaffer

March 26, 2024

The organization has reached a deal with the sellers to permanently preserve the area if they can reach the \$8 million price tag by March 2025. Given its location and pristine state, Executive Director Harrison Marks says the deal is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Lawsuit filed to delay construction on VA wind farm in the name of saving the North Atlantic right whale

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 26, 2024

As few as 360 North Atlantic right whales remain alive in the wild. However, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's data on North Atlantic right whale deaths show no indication that offshore wind is driving up mortality.

State looking for ISP's to provide broadband in Beaufort County

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 26, 2024

The state has asked internet service providers that are prequalified to participate in state broadband expansion programs to submit proposals to provide broadband to the county.

State school superintendent candidate blames the media for creating "gotcha moments" out of her own social media posts

Steve Harrison

March 26, 2024

In one post about former President Obama, Michele Morrow wrote that "we could make some money back from televising his death" and suggested he be killed by firing squad on Pay Per View. She also said she did not want to waste another dime supporting his life.

N.C. Supreme Court suspends Guilford judge

Paul Garber / WFDD

March 26, 2024

Foster called the Wake County magistrates office and asked them to reconsider a \$1000 bond for an inmate. The magistrates said Foster began speaking loudly when told she would have to go through Wake County's chief district court judge. At no point did Foster let the magistrates know that the defendant was her son, who had a different last name.

After rains gave ENC a reprieve, tree pollen county expected to be very high again this week

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 26, 2024

Sound Rivers officials say the yellow muck on area rivers, shorelines, and creeks that could crop up again this week, with the higher tree pollen counts that are expected, isn't anything alarming, and is likely pine pollen.

Report: Wetland losses particularly prevalent in coastal watersheds of the Carolinas

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 26, 2024

The report shows wetland loss has disproportionately impacted vegetated wetlands like marshes and swamps and the declines were particularly prevalent in the coastal watersheds of the Carolinas.

How much rain did we get? Become a weather citizen scientist

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 26, 2024

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow network is part of a growing national network of home-based and amateur weather spotters.

Local Government Roundup - March 25, 2024

Ryan Shaffer

March 24, 2024

A look at some of the stories coming out of town halls and board rooms across Eastern North Carolina.

Crews battle a wildfire fire between Maysville and Piney Green Thursday afternoon

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

U.S. Highway 17 was hazy throughout a portion of Jones County and into Jacksonville.

State officials looking for citizen scientists to collect information about rare North Carolina turtle

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

More more than a thousand volunteer kayakers have been conducting surveys each spring for ten years to learn more about the turtle, and this year they are for more kayakers and naturalists who may want to help.

Unilever's divestment of Ben and Jerry's could bring NC retirement plan investment in the UK company back into play

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

Ben & Jerry's Homemade was added to North Carolina's list of companies banned from state investments because of the ice cream maker's boycott of Israel.

College scholarships available for injured military, veterans and their families

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

The NC Patriot Star Family Recovery Scholarship provides up to \$6,500 per semester. Officials with the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office say it's open to a child or spouse of a fallen service member or disabled veteran, children of injured active-duty service members, or a disabled veteran with a VA disability rating of at least 50%.

Plan for a slightly longer hike when visiting Cape Lookout Lighthouse by ferry

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

The National Park Service says the dock servicing the lighthouse and south beaches of South Core Banks will be out of commission for some time while repairs are being made.

Slime, balloons and sharks teeth; STEM event this weekend in Havelock

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

Craven Community College will host a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics event this weekend. "Spring Showers Brings STEM Powers" is free and open to everyone.

NC dementia caregivers provided 723 million hours of unpaid care valued at \$10.9 billion last year

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 22, 2024

The Alzheimer's Association 2024 Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures report estimates that 6.9 million people age 65 and older in the U.S. are living with Alzheimer's dementia, including more than 210,000 in North Carolina.

NC DMV, others nationwide back up and running after database crash

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

All North Carolina Driver License offices were back up and running by about 1 p.m. Thursday after a temporary nationwide outage of a motor vehicle database system which prevented the issuance of driver licenses.

Caller to N.C. U.S. Senator's office threatens "I will find you and shoot you" if TikTok is banned

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

TikTok's misinformation campaign, North Carolina U.S. Senator Thom Tillis said, is pushing people who use the platform to call their members of Congress, and callers like this who communicate threats against elected officials could be committing a federal crime.

ENC license plate agency reopens after months-long closure

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

The license plate agency on Creek Drive in Greenville is back open. It's in the same location as the previous agency that closed in December.

New North Carolina study shows future air quality measures may need to be more localized

Sophie Mallinson, WUNC

March 21, 2024

PM2.5 levels have decreased nationally. But, the chemical composition of the particles varies from place to place, where some can be more toxic than others.

Tight races in North Carolina this year could hinge on turnout among young voters

Rusty Jacobs, WUNC

March 21, 2024

Western Carolina University Political Science Professor Chris Cooper says young voter turnout this year could swing outcomes in tight statewide races for attorney general, governor, and president.

NC AG urges congress to fund to installation of equipment to detect fentanyl in vehicles entering the US

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

Agents would be able to x-ray more cars and trucks using massive drive-through screeners at the border with the technology, and while lawmakers included the funding in the bipartisan border security legislation, congressional Republicans blocked the bill earlier this year.

Phone scam targets families of North Carolina prison inmates

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction says some family members have received a phone call, saying the inmate can be released early if the offender is fitted with an ankle monitor and if the family pays a fee to the NC Post-Release Supervision and Parole Commission.

Work back underway on long-stalled road project in Greenville

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 21, 2024

Nearly a year after a construction stop, construction on Dickinson Avenue in Greenville is back underway.

Hike under the Worm Full Moon this weekend

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 20, 2024

A ranger will lead the after-hours hike at Hammocks Beach State Park.

Neuse River estuary saltier than normal for this time of year

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 20, 2024

The average surface salinity is around 15 but right now it's around 18.

First Lady visiting North Carolina on Wednesday

Will Michaels

March 20, 2024

The White House says the Jill Biden will be in Durham this afternoon to talk about investments in women's health research.

Nearly 500 ballots not counted in the NC primary because voter didn't have photo ID

Steve Harrison

March 20, 2024

That works out to one uncounted ballot for every 3,806 voters.

Overshadowed by April event, partial lunar eclipse will be dimly visible in ENC on Monday

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 20, 2024

A penumbral lunar eclipse happens when the Sun, Earth, and the Moon are imperfectly aligned, and the Earth blocks some of the Sun's light from directly reaching the Moon's surface.

NCDHHS asking for feedback on weatherization waiver

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 20, 2024

Officials said the waiver would raise funds for the Weatherization Assistance Program and Heating and Air Repair and Replacement Program from 15% to 25% this fiscal year.

North Carolina lands syringe-manufacturing plant that will employ 400

Associated Press

March 19, 2024

A company that makes containers and injections for vaccines and other drugs will build a new manufacturing plant in eastern North Carolina, creating 400 jobs by the end of the decade, officials announced on Monday.

North Carolina organization that supports victims of human trafficking has been recognized by the FBI

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 19, 2024

The FBI Charlotte Field Office gave "Beloved Haven" of Elizabeth City the 2023 Director's Community Leadership Award for North Carolina.

Spring is here and some familiar North Carolina critters will begin emerging from their winter slumbers

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 19, 2024

Black Bears emerge from their dens in spring and become more active; snakes become more active as the weather warms; coyote sightings spike in the spring and peak in May; and foxes give birth between late February and April.

NCORR taking comments on proposed changes to Hurricane Florence recovery and resiliency programs

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 19, 2024

Proposed changes include spending on the Homeowner Recovery Program, Affordable Housing Development Fund, Homeownership Assistance Program, Infrastructure Recovery Program and Strategic Buyout Program, among other updates.

Traveling by train continues to increase in North Carolina

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 19, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Transportation says the state's intercity passenger rail service carried more than 101,000 people in the first months of this year, 18,000 more than in the same two months last year.

Winter storms caused significant erosion on Emerald Isle

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 18, 2024

Many winter storms have left significant erosion along the Bogue Banks beaches, and in some spots on Emerald Isle the escarpments – or sort of sand cliffs – have a drop-off of as much as six feet.

NC Congressman apologizes for how he handled his vote to potentially ban TikTok

Steve Harrison

March 18, 2024

Charlotte Democratic Congressman Jeff Jackson apologized on a video over the weekend for how he handled his vote to potentially ban the popular app TikTok, where Jackson has built a large following.

New trash trap will collect litter, sediment, and other pollutants out of tributary of the Tar River

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 18, 2024

The Greenville trap will be the fifth installed as part of Sound Rivers' Litter-Free Rivers program.

OBX officials plead with beach-goers to stop digging, leaving deep holes in the sand

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 18, 2024

In just one day last week, the Kill Devil Hills ocean rescue supervisor responded to three large holes on the beach.

Public comment open list of NC streams, rivers, and other bodies of water considered to be "impaired"

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 18, 2024

In the Neuse, New, and Tar-Pamlico River basins, the issues listed in various areas include turbidity – or cloudy water – high levels of copper and zinc, excessive chlorophyll, high levels of PCBs in fish tissues, and other impairments.

After dress code modernization, pantyhose are now optional for women in the USMC

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

Although they've made a huge reemergence on fashion runways this spring, the undergarment that has been required of women in the Marine Corps for the past 81 years will now be optional.

Former NC governor steps down from leadership at No Labels

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

Asked by The Charlotte News & Observer about why he was stepping down, Pat McCrory said, "it was time to leave and pursue other opportunities."

Labor organization asks state to reconsider decision not to adopt new infectious disease rules for workplaces

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

Now NC State AFL-CIO President MaryBe McMillan is asking North Carolina Labor Commissioner Josh Dobson to reconsider that decision. She said, "We cannot call workers 'essential' and continue to treat them as expendable."

Work scheduled for heavily traveled road in Jacksonville this weekend postponed

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

An exact date for the Gum Branch Road project to start has not yet been announced.

Kenansville company asks DEQ to renew permit that allows release of PFAS into Cape Fear River

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

Toxic chemicals in the Cape Fear came to light in 2017, when it was made public that Chemours was dumping PFAS into the same river.

Next NC Scholarship to cover tuition and fees completely for some college students

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

Students whose families make \$80,000 a year or less can apply for the Next NC Scholarship to cover their tuition and fees completely. Eligible students will get up to \$3,000 per year, and the money does not have to be repaid.

Discussion about a new species will be part of next week's whale Whales and Whaling Symposium

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 15, 2024

The North Carolina Maritime Museum is hosting The Whales and Whaling Symposium next week. It's the first since 2019 that will be held in person, after the COVID-19 pandemic.

NC expert says the number of whale deaths along the East Coast in the past couple of weeks is concerning

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 14, 2024

North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences Mammalogy Research Curator Dr. Michael Cove said, "It does seem like a lot, and it can be a little bit scary and depressing, frankly."

NC AG urges for strengthened and updated laws for protecting children online

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 14, 2024

NC Attorney General Josh Stein said the laws need to catch up to the technology, but the rules governing online privacy protections for children up to age 13 have not been updated in more than a decade.

Eastern North Carolina mail carrier bitten by a dog last week

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 14, 2024

USPS officials say more than 5,300 Postal Service employees were attacked by dogs while delivering the mail in 2022. North Carolina was tenth in the U.S for dog attacks on mail carriers, with 146.

Tillis' bill seeks to reduce the minimum wage farmers can pay seasonal workers

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 14, 2024

Senator Thom Tillis said what's called the Adverse Effect Wage Rate in North Carolina rose 6% in January, and with net farm income projected to decrease by more than 25% this year, farmers in North Carolina and across the country are struggling to make their planting decisions for this crop season.

TikTok user Jeff Jackson votes in favor of ban, while TikTok skeptic Dan Bishop votes no

Steve Harrison

March 14, 2024

Jackson and Bishop are running against each other for North Carolina Attorney General.

McDowell now uncontested in North Carolina House race after ex-Rep. Walker declines runoff

Gary D. Robertson, Associated Press

March 14, 2024

A former North Carolina representative who finished second in last week's primary for essentially his old U.S. House seat announced on Wednesday that he won't ask for a runoff and will join Donald Trump's presidential campaign instead.

North Carolina voter ID lawsuit still heading for trial after judge declines to end challenge

Gary D. Robertson, Associated Press

March 14, 2024

A federal trial over North Carolina's photo voter identification law remains set for May after a judge refused Wednesday to end efforts by civil rights groups that sued over the requirement on allegations that its provisions are marred by racial bias.

Appeal coming from North Carolina Republicans in elections boards litigation

Gary D. Robertson, Associated Press

March 14, 2024

North Carolina Republican legislative leaders will appeal the decision by judges that declared the GOP's changes to how elections board members are chosen violate the state constitution while taking power from the governor.

Post-pandemic, NC DOL chooses not to adopt new infectious disease rules for farms, construction companies

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 14, 2024

The groups wanted the state to put requirements in place for face masks, personal protective equipment and social distancing standards. The rules would have applied to work sites, employee housing quarters, and buses or other vehicles used to transport workers.

In line with the times: NC vehicle inspection locations required to ditch dial-up internet

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Transportation lists about 6,000 stations in the state that run inspections and about a third of them are still on dial-up.

NC officials say women's cancer charity took in \$18 million, only spent 1% on helping patients

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

Attorney General Josh Stein and Secretary of State Elaine Marshall have accused the Women's Cancer Fund and its owner Gregory Anderson of deceiving donors and violating telemarketing and consumer protection laws.

Poll shows NC governors race is too close to call, but many voters are still undecided

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

The WRAL News poll of 598 likely voters shows a too-close-to-call race for governor, with Democratic nominee Josh Stein leading Republican nominee Mark Robinson 44% to 42%. But 15% of likely voters said they're still undecided ahead of the November general election.

Elizabethan Gardens dig uncovers more clues in the centuries-old mystery of Roanoke's lost colony

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

The Lost Colony of Roanoke has fascinated people for centuries. Where did the 100 or so colonists go when they left the Outer Banks in the late 1500s?

Hearing to address appeal by couple, contractor accused of damaging dunes in Onslow County beach town

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

The North Topsail Beach town zoning board of adjustment will review an appeal by Matthew Davis against a citation issued to Philip and Kristen Buckley, claiming their contractor violated a town development ordinance.

Patient information hacked at ENC radiology practice

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 13, 2024

Eastern Radiologists explained in a letter to patients that "suspicious activity" was detected in last fall, and an investigation found that "unauthorized party" accessed their network between November 20th and November 24th.

Check your fridge and freezer, popular turkey sausage recalled

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

More than 35,000 pounds of Johnsonville Turkey Kielbasa is being recalled after several complaints of black rubber material in it.

BBB in ENC warns of an increase in scams after online sports betting became legal in North Carolina

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

The scam works like this: You place a bet, and, at first, everything seems normal. But as soon as you try to cash out your winnings, you find you can't withdraw a cent. Scammers will make up various excuses, including asking you to deposit even more money before you can withdraw your winnings.

Three graduate from program that helps inmates dealing with drug addiction and mental health disorders

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

The Craven County Sheriff's Office was awarded a Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program grant of just under \$1 million over three years to establish services tailored to offenders in the criminal justice system specifically addressing substance use issues and mental health challenges.

Education leaders advocate for changes in the way school principals are paid in North Carolina

Amy Diaz, WFDD

March 12, 2024

The state House Select Committee on Education Reform met Monday afternoon to discuss principal compensation in North Carolina and education officials are advocating for more complex school factors to be accounted for in the pay plan.

One 5 minute break, no shade, no cups for water; NC farm fined after seasonal worker's heat stroke death

Lisa Worf

March 12, 2024

The citation says Barnes Farming did not take adequate measures to protect employees from heat-related illness and scheduled just one 5-minute break for the six-hour day. Shaded or cool areas were not provided for those breaks, and while a 10-gallon cooler was available, there were no cups so employees had to place their head under the spigot to drink.

Last weeks heavy rains unleashed a torrent of sewage spills across eastern North Carolina

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

Riverkeepers said nearly 600,000 gallons of sewage spilled from the Havelock treatment facility into Slocum Creek and about 200,000 gallons of sewage made its way from a manhole in Rocky Mount to the adjacent storm water drain, which flows directly into the Tar River.

Congressmen pay tribute on the U.S. House floor to men killed in OBX boat crash

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

Two members of the Outer Banks fishing community who died in a boating accident last week have been recognized on the floor of the U.S. House.

Two children at an ENC daycare may have overdosed on fentanyl they thought was candy

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 12, 2024

Deputies with the Duplin County Sheriff's Office were sent to ECU Health Duplin Hospital after healthcare officials reported the suspected overdoses that happened at Lou Anna's Child Care Center in Kenansville.

High demand means tens of thousands may be shut out of NC school vouchers

Ann Doss Helms, WFAE

March 11, 2024

Critics of the voucher program like to say that even millionaires can now get public money to help pay their kids' private school tuition. And that's true in theory. But the legislation gives first priority to current scholarship recipients and lower-income families.

Online sports betting launches at noon Monday in North Carolina

Will Michaels

March 11, 2024

The law that legalizes sports betting in North Carolina allows up to 12 sports book operators to have licenses to operate in the state a cost of a million dollars each.

Teen arrested in 2023 murder outside Planet Fitness, suspect linked to a second killing

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 11, 2024

Early in the morning on the 4th of July, 21-year-old Jayden Harrison was shot and killed in the parking lot of the gym on Thomas Langston Road. Six months earlier, on December 10, 2022, another young man was shot multiple times in the area of Kinsey Loop in Winterville.

Hand count in Pitt County delayed by the death of an election worker

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 11, 2024

Called the "sample hand-to-eye count," this audit recounts the ballots in the random precincts to ensure reliability of machine-tabulated results.

Following safety review, grounded Osprey return to the skies

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 11, 2024

The entire fleet of Osprey was grounded by the U.S. military following the deadly crash off Japan's coast in late November, which killed eight Air Force Special Operations Command service members.

Bystander injured, charged with interfering in an arrest in New Bern

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 11, 2024

While the New Bern Police Department was making an arrest on Saturday, officials said a bystander who was interfering with the arrest was injured, treated and released from the hospital, and charged with obstruction and assaulting an officer.

Chick-fil-A franchise owner accused of traveling to North Carolina for sex with 15-year-old

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

Investigators say Stacy Austin, 49, admitted to sexual acts with the teen and said was concerned about losing his job as owner of a Chik-fil-a in Belmont, Ohio.

NC AG appeals to Meta to do more to prevent scammers from locking users out of their accounts

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

From 2022 to 2023, Attorney General Josh Stein said the North Carolina Department of Justice saw a 330 percent increase in complaints related to these account takeovers.

Vouchers take the stage before the state board of education meeting, Gov. calls for moratorium

Liz Schlemmer

March 8, 2024

Governor Roy Cooper joined State Superintendent Catherine Truitt and Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson at the head of the boardroom.

Small-town politics lead to two employee resignations in an eastern North Carolina community

Ryan Shaffer

March 8, 2024

For months, some town commissioners have been directly asking town employees about their day-to-day work as part of efforts to identify fraud and misspending – only to report none at its February meeting. The extent of the questioning has led some to accuse commissioners of micromanaging.

Hearing for proposed huge hike in rental property insurance rates pushed back to July

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

The hearing on the dwelling insurance increase was scheduled for April 8, but North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey said it's been moved to July 22.

Camp Lejeune Marines return from deployment off the coast of Israel

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

The 4,000 sailors and Marines of the Amphibious Ready Group were most recently stationed off the coast of Israel, where the Navy has had a heightened presence since war broke out in Gaza in October.

Survey shows Shackleford Bank wild horse herd is healthy

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

Officials with Cape Lookout National Seashore and the Foundation for Shackleford Horses say there were 117 horses on Shackleford Banks at the end of last year, and the herd is 62% female and 38% male.

Massive fire at Rocky Mount recycling yard is under control

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 8, 2024

The fire at Rocky Mount Recyclers started late Wednesday night and burned for most of Thursday.

New program will feed one million NC children this summer

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

Families who qualify will receive a one-time payment of \$120 per eligible child for the summer period, and officials say it will come on debit-like EBT cards for families to purchase groceries at stores that accept EBT.

VA access to health care expanded, immediate treatment available for vets under to PACT Act expanded

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

The PACT Act is now allowing all veterans as far back as the 1950s that were exposed to burn pits, contaminated water aboard Camp Lejeune, and other toxic substances to immediately apply for treatment of illnesses that may be connected to their exposure.

ECU Health Medical Center named the top hospital in the country for patient experience

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

PEP Health uses an AI platform to pull information from patient comments on social media and review platforms, and the study used more than 30 million online patient reviews from 2023.

There were 15 flu deaths, including two children, in North Carolina last week

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

The recent weekly report from the North Carolina Department of Human Services shows a total of 281 flu deaths so far this season.

Bertie County man accused of scamming insurance companies out of \$140,000 by using fake identities

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey said William Alston is facing several charges, including insurance fraud and forgery, for taking out fraudulent policies, spread across nine insurance companies, totaling \$1.86 million.

Dead whale washes ashore in OBX, third whale death in the region in three days

Katherine Hafner

March 7, 2024

The female minke whale in Corolla showed no external signs of trauma. Whales along the East Coast have been dying at a high rate for nearly a decade.

Post pandemic. NC businesses feeling optimistic but COVID-19 era challenges remain

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

A new survey from the North Carolina Pandemic Recovery Office and researchers at East Carolina University shows that, overall, recent business conditions remain unchanged.

State health plan coverage for drugs for weight loss ends April 1 after failed price negotiations

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

State Treasurer Dale Folwell said he has tried several times to negotiate with Nova Nordisk, Eli Lilly and the plan's pharmacy benefit manager.

Search ends for second boater missing in crash that killed Wicked Tuna captain in OBX

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

The bodies of Capt. Charlie "Griff" Griffin, who appeared on seasons two through five of Wicked Tuna: Outer Banks, and his dog Leila were found along the shore after an apparent boating mishap. The other boater, 36-year-old Chad Dunn, has not been found.

FDA cautioning people not to eat some brands of ground cinnamon amid lead investigation

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 7, 2024

The US Food and Drug Administration has expanded its investigation into tainted cinnamon products, and is now cautioning people not to use several brands of ground cinnamon because they have elevated levels of lead.

NC Wildlife approves longer bear hunting season in Western NC

Ryan Shaffer

March 7, 2024

It's the first change to the season's length in decades and is part of a slate of recent changes to manage the NC's growing black bear population

After ballots are cast, the county elections boards certification process begins

Rusty Jacobs, WUNC

March 6, 2024

While primary votes have been cast in North Carolina, election administrators still have a lot of work to do. Over the next 10 days, county elections boards will go through the vote certification process.

Nicole Sidman will face party-flipping NC State House District 105 Representative Tricia Cotham in November

WFAE

March 6, 2024

The district as it is drawn now is a toss-up, meaning it will likely be one of the few competitive statehouse races in North Carolina. It includes Mint Hill, Matthews and south Charlotte.

State Senator Natasha Marcus wins Democratic primary for insurance commissioner
WFAE

March 6, 2024

She'll face Mike Causey, the incumbent Republican commissioner, in November.

Surprise loss: incumbent State Superintendent defeated by challenger in the Republican primary.

Liz Schlemmer

March 6, 2024

Morrow touts her 16 years of homeschooling experience and was formerly an emergency department nurse and Christian missionary. Morrow cast herself as more conservative than current NC Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt.

U.S. Rep. Jeff Jackson wins the Democratic primary for North Carolina attorney general

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 6, 2024

Jackson will take on U.S. Rep. Dan Bishop in the general election this November.

NC House Speaker wins Republican nomination for Congress in 14th District

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 6, 2024

North Carolina House Speaker Tim Moore won the Republican nomination for Congress in the state's 14th District on Tuesday.

Political newcomer grabs the Republican nomination for NC's 1st congressional district seat

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 6, 2024

Laurie Buckhout grabbed the Republican nomination against Sandy Smith Tuesday for the first congressional district seat currently held by Davis.

North Carolina State Senator Rachel Hunt wins a Democratic primary race for lieutenant governor

WFAE

March 6, 2024

Hunt, of Charlotte, won a three-way Democratic primary race for lieutenant governor with about 70% of the vote.

NC AG Josh Stein and Lt. Governor Mark Robinson easily won their party's primaries for governor

Colin Campbell, WUNC

March 6, 2024

Both Stein and Robinson are already looking toward the general election, which is expected to be the most expensive governor's race in history.

Deputies respond to incident at polling place in rural Maysville

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 6, 2024

Onslow County Sheriff Chris Thomas said deputies were called by poll workers to the polling center at Grants Creek Missionary Baptist Church in Maysville to investigate an incident that happened after polls closed.

Countdown to the eclipse; what we'll see in ENC in April and how to see it safely

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

A total solar eclipse will cross North America next month, passing over Mexico, the United States, and Canada. In North Carolina, sky watchers will see a partial eclipse.

Are you an oyster lover? The North Carolina Coastal Federation wants to know how you recycle shells

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

Recycling the shells can create a healthier environment for marine life and improve water quality.

Two accused of poaching hundreds of Venus fly traps from nature conservancy land

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

The meat-eating plants are native to the region and only grow within a 100-mile radius of Wilmington, and stealing them is considered a felony.

Young humpback whale found dead in Virginia Beach

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

The Virginia Aquarium's Stranding Response team will perform a necropsy and determine the cause of death.

Wicked Tuna captain killed in OBX boating accident, search continues for second person on the boat

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

According to a post in his Facebook page, Capt. Charlie "Griff" Griffin, who appeared on Season 4 of Wicked Tuna, and his dog Leila died in a boating accident after he was reported as overdue Sunday night. Crews are still searching for a second person on the boat.

Heavy weekend rains lead to largest ever wastewater discharge into Slocum Creek in Havelock

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

Officials say two discharges of untreated wastewater led to 591,000 gallons of waste entering Joe's Branch and the bank of the East Prong of Slocum Creek.

Eastern Band of Cherokee's cannabis dispensary will open on 4/20

Blue Ridge Public Radio

March 5, 2024

Lee Griffin is human resources director of Qualla Enterprises. He said the open date is a business decision.

Greatest threat for severe weather in ENC comes from spring storms rather than hurricanes

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

Many people immediately think of hurricanes when the topic of severe weather comes up in North Carolina, but, actually, the period of the greatest threat for severe weather doesn't begin when hurricane season starts – it's now, starting in March.

Primary 2024: Changes voters may see at the polling place in North Carolina

Annette Weston-Riggs

March 5, 2024

A change in election law that took effect ahead of this primary will impact the time it takes to tally up the results. For some counties it may be about 30 minutes later than in previous years, but in other counties that have multiple early voting sites, it may be an hour or two longer before those results are posted.

Oriental celebrates 125 years with weekend full of events

Ryan Shaffer

March 1, 2024

Founded in 1899, the Town of Oriental turns 125 this weekend. To celebrate, the town is hosting vendors, live musicians, and both street and boat parades — with a guest appearance by the town's dragon mascot.

What to expect with voter ID this primary

Ryan Shaffer

March 1, 2024

Local elections officials and watchdogs are working to educate voters on the ID requirement, after a rocky rollout in November.

'Chaos and movement': Alzheimer's exhibit at Craven Arts Council explores memory and loss

Ryan Shaffer

February 29, 2024

"The Alzheimer's Fantasies" is a new exhibit on display at the Bank of the Arts in New Bern. The exhibition's artist has spent years on works that he says are a conversation with himself as he cared for his late wife.

Father fighting for return of ENC toddler from Costa Rica; mother says she was forced to flee to keep 2yo safe

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 29, 2024

An eastern North Carolina man is working to bring his baby daughter home, after he says her mother took her to South America to avoid a custody battle. The toddler's mother, though, says she left to keep her little girl safe. More on the bitter custody fight and how it's playing out in Carteret County and Costa Rica.

ENC mayor appointed to the National League of Cities' Public Safety and Crime Prevention committee

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 29, 2024

The committee develops the NLC's federal policy positions on issues involving crime prevention, corrections, substance abuse, disaster preparedness and relief, gun control and other related issues.

Man who attacked police with hockey stick during Capitol riot gets over 3 years in prison

Associated Press

February 29, 2024

Michael Joseph Foy, 33, threw the pole at police and struck officers with the hockey stick as a mob of rioters fought for control of an entrance to the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Then he climbed through a broken window and walked around the building.

A coach asks 'When are we going to ban court storming?' A solution isn't seen as all that easy

Associated Press

February 29, 2024

College basketball fans have been storming courts to celebrate for at least 75 years.

Applications open to ENC communities for grants to improve public beach access

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 29, 2024

The N.C. Division of Coastal Management is accepting applications for grants to improve public beach access.

VA health benefit expansion takes effect next week

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 29, 2024

Next week, VA health care will be expanding to millions more Veterans years earlier than called for by the PACT Act.

Primary results are expected to take longer to report after change in NC state law

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 29, 2024

As a result of recent changes in state law, in-person early voting results will be reported later than usual on election night next week's primary, and state officials say the changes may cause Election Day results to be reported later as well.

Update: Identities of ECU scientist shot in "unprovoked attack" near Greenville elementary school, suspect released

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 28, 2024

Chief Ted Sauls said the shooting took place on East Fifth Street near Wahl-Coates Elementary School at about 8:30 a.m.

Head of EPA visits New Bern, talks Supreme Court and billions of dollars in federal spending for local projects

Ryan Shaffer

February 28, 2024

EPA Administrator Michael Regan is an ENC native. With more than \$130 billion approved by Congress, the Environmental Protection Agency is tasked with identifying projects to receive funding. In the background are several Supreme Court cases that could restrict his agency's authority.

Trump, Haley, Harris all visiting NC ahead of next week's primary

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

North Carolina's primary is fast approaching – it's on March 5th – and the candidates at the top of the ballot will pay a visit to the state this week.

NC superintendent says four grades for schools would be better than one

WFAE

February 27, 2024

State Superintendent Catherine Truitt said the new school accountability plan would give public schools four letter grades, which would provide information about proficiency in core subjects, student progress, preparation for college and careers and school climate.

AG files brief in court case, defending NC laws against high-interest predatory lending

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

A car title lender is challenging the constitutionality of North Carolina's laws preventing such loans, and Attorney General Josh Stein said the state kicked predatory, payday, and car title lenders out of North Carolina years ago, and he's not letting them back in.

Sound Rivers officials say Neuse River bacterial pollution in Kinston has been resolved

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

After taking samples, testing the water and getting results of extremely elevated levels of bacteria in the samples, Riverkeeper Samantha Krop alerted the city.

N.C. Marine Fisheries selects draft striped mullet management plan that would reduce harvest by 35%

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

The draft amendment is scheduled for final commission approval in May.

NC Senate leader not in favor of any "wholesale changes" to the state's current abortion law

Steve Harrison

February 27, 2024

North Carolina Senate leader Phil Berger said today he's not in favor of any "wholesale changes" to the state's ban on most abortions after 12 weeks.

NC Congressman visits U.S. soldiers advising in Ukraine on second anniversary of Russian invasion

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

The Democrat watched as the Ukrainian military prepared for its operations on the front lines of the conflict and met with U.S. soldiers training and advising Ukrainian fighters on the front line.

Person who made social media threat targeting ENC middle school identified

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

Onslow County Sheriff Chris Thomas said his investigators have determined that there was no credible threat of violence toward the school.

Six hour standoff that closed U.S. 17 ends with man in custody on domestic assault charges

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

A woman called 9-1-1 and said her husband had taken pills, grabbed a gun, and hit her in the head with a door when she was leaving the home.

Eight day old baby, subject of an Amber Alert, found safe; parents still on the run

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 27, 2024

Security video from a Big Lots store in Durham showed the couple remove the baby from the car listed in the Amber Alert and take the carrier to the woods.

Local state park was formed as a recreation place for African Americans during segregation

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 26, 2024

Local historians and park leaders will talk about how the park became important to the Swansboro community and how it evolved into a center for recreation, education, preservation, and conservation.

Training forum on N.C. voter ID law this week in New Bern

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 26, 2024

Craven County will host a public Voter Photo ID Law seminar on Thursday at the NC Cooperative Extension - Craven County Center in New Bern.

Surface water temps in the Atlantic are more like those seen in July. Does that mean an active hurricane season in ENC?

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 26, 2024

Hurricane season is still more than three months away, and by themselves, the warmer waters are no guarantee of a severe hurricane season. But Erik Heden with the National Weather Service in Newport/Morehead City said they do skew the odds in favor of a more active one.

Under fire brewery and its owner cited by ALE after citizen warrants were filed

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 23, 2024

According to the ALE report, Gary Sholar was arrested on three charges, and the Edward Teach brewery itself was found to have been brewing alcohol without a brewing permit.

N.C. native Lara Trump calls on Republicans to embrace early voting

WFAE

February 23, 2024

Speaking at the Conservative Political Action Committee on Thursday, Lara Trump, who's from North Carolina, said the landscape has shifted.

Following inflammatory statements, N.C. Lt. Gov. blamed the media for mischaracterizing him in CPAC speech

Steve Harrison

February 23, 2024

North Carolina Lieutenant Governor Mark Robinson spoke on Thursday at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington D.C. Robinson is leading the Republican primary for governor...two weeks before the March 5 election.

Flu cases drop, COVID-19 cases increase in North Carolina

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 23, 2024

COVID-19 hospital admissions tapered off after the start of the year but have since come back up, with slight increases the past two consecutive weeks.

Firefighting foam companies ask to be removed from southeastern North Carolina county's lawsuit

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 23, 2024

Tyco argues that "at least some of the AFFF" that resulted in the claims was manufactured by Tyco and other suppliers in line with military specifications, and that the county's property including the Wilmington International Airport is required to use AFFF with military specifications.

Investigation into murder of ENC transgender woman in 2021 remains active three years on

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 23, 2024

Jacksonville police and the FBI continue to search for those responsible for the murder of Jenna Franks, a transgender woman whose body was found in the woods near a bike trail on near Ellis Boulevard and White Street on February 24, 2021.

Local Government Roundup - Feb. 22, 2024

Ryan Shaffer

February 22, 2024

A look at some of the stories coming out of town halls and board rooms across Eastern North Carolina.

NC AG calling on Congress to help lower drug costs by better regulating pharmacy benefit managers

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 22, 2024

Attorney General Josh Stein said the third-party companies are putting profits over patients, and that's unacceptable.

"Investing in America" funding means 13 ENC communities will see expanded broadband access

Sophie Mallinson, WUNC

February 22, 2024

Biden-administration officials have announced funding for more than 200 rural infrastructure projects across the nation. Totalling more than \$770,000,000, the projects are part of the administration's "Investing in America" agenda.

GUC temporarily increasing rates to offset high 2022 energy costs

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 22, 2024

An eastern North Carolina utility company will increase rates for the next two years, because it cost them more to purchase electricity from Duke Energy.

Small Business Transparency Act: what ENC business leaders need to know about the federal requirement

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 22, 2024

A federal law enacted intended to curb things like fraud, money laundering and other financial misdeeds went into effect at the beginning of the year, but an eastern North Carolina small business expert says many may not be aware of the requirement.

Fictionalized love story movie about 1898 Wilmington massacre draws criticism

Gwendolyn Glenn

February 22, 2024

The conservative John Locke Foundation has produced a short, fictional film, "In The Pines," on the massacre that is attracting criticism.

Going on 30 years, an education funding dispute returns to the North Carolina Supreme Court

Associated Press

February 22, 2024

Longstanding education funding litigation is returning to North Carolina's highest court hardly a year after a majority of justices — all Democrats — agreed that taxpayer money could be moved to spend on addressing schooling inequities statewide without the express approval of legislators.

Havelock, Sound Rivers address Slocum Creek contamination and wastewater struggles

Ryan Shaffer

February 21, 2024

The "listening session" comes after a series of failed water quality tests over the summer and several spills and overflows to start off 2024.

An accidental discovery at ECU is upending scientists' understanding of how muscles work

Ryan Shaffer

February 21, 2024

The muscle in question is the Flexor Digitorum Brevis, or FDB. It's the muscle at the bottom of the foot that curls the toes. Previously, we understood that all muscles require oxygen to create the energy needed to operate, but this muscle is different.

Grants available to cover the cost of teacher licensing exams

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

Gabrielle Barnes, Senior Regional Program Manager for TeachNC, said the exams are hard enough as it is, and they don't want finances to be an additional barrier that gets in the way of getting passionate teachers into classrooms.

NCDOT reminding candidates, supporters to place roadside signs carefully

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

Early voting is underway, ahead of North Carolina's primary election day on March 5, and NCDOT is reminding candidates and their supporters that there are legal requirements for placing political signs along the side of some state-maintained roads.

ENC man accused of sexually abusing child under age 15 over several years

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

In January, a school resource officer was told about a sexual assault a child in the Grimesland area, and when speaking with the victim investigators learned the assaults had been happening for years.

New Bern teen accused of several child exploitation charges

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

New Bern police raided the home of 18-year-old Elijah Mitchell after a tip from the Davidson County Sheriff's Office.

Onslow County hospitalized four-year-old made "Junior Game Warden" by NCWRC

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

Lane has had numerous medical issues, and he gets through most of his days watching North Woods Law, a television show about wildlife law enforcement officers in Maine.

NC AG calling on FDA to require lead testing in food made for babies

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

Attorney General Josh Stein and 20 other attorneys general are calling on the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to require the baby food industry to test all finished food products for lead and other toxic metals.

Havelock listening session will address ongoing bacterial contamination in Slocum Creek

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 20, 2024

The presentation will include information about how to spot the signs of a sewage spill and septic system failure, the difference between a healthy and unhealthy waterway, and ways people can look out for the water.

NC Quick Pass responders now work in 19 states

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 19, 2024

NC Quick Pass customers with a transponder can now effortlessly pay tolls anywhere E-ZPass is accepted.

NCDHHS releases draft plan meant to help people with disabilities live in inclusive communities

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 19, 2024

The 2024-25 Olmstead Plan is intended to help state government and other agencies make decisions that will improve the lives of children and families, youth, adults and older adults with disabilities.

Atlantic horseshoe crab could be placed on the Endangered Species List

Ryan Shaffer

February 19, 2024

The Center for Biological Diversity and 22 other organizations petition NOAA, claiming that overharvesting and habitat loss prompt listing.

ECU player first division I athlete to play in a baseball game with a prosthetic leg

Ryan Shaffer

February 19, 2024

After losing part of his leg in a 2022 boating accident, sophomore Parker Byrd from Laurinburg, N.C., appeared in the season opener against Rider University with a prosthetic leg.

Water outage Monday night for parts of Atlantic Beach

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 19, 2024

The outage will begin at 10 p.m. and officials say the water should be back on by 6:00 a.m. on Tuesday.

Body found in a wooded area in Beaufort County

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 19, 2024

Beaufort County Sheriff's Office investigators say the skeletal remains were found near near River Road in Washington on Sunday.

Poll workers, voters adapting to state's photo ID requirement

[Rusty Jacobs, WUNC](#)

February 15, 2024

Early in-person voting starts Thursday. For many North Carolina voters it will be the first time they cast a ballot under a photo ID law drafted in 2018.

NC aquarium's sting ray is pregnant without a male present; what is parthenogenesis?

[Annette Weston-Riggs](#)

February 14, 2024

Officials at a North Carolina aquarium are anxiously awaiting the birth of sting ray pups – and trying to determine how, exactly, Charlotte got pregnant without a male ray in her tank.

North Carolina tells nature-based therapy program to stop admissions during probe of boy's death

[Associated Press](#)

February 14, 2024

The cause of the boy's death is still pending, but the Transylvania County Sheriff's Office said in a news release last week that the pathologist who conducted the autopsy told investigators the death appeared not to be natural. The autopsy was performed because his death appeared suspicious since it occurred less than 24 hours after the boy arrived.

Town employee who advocated for Holly Plaza tenants fired for 'unapproved' media interview

[Annette Weston-Riggs](#)

February 14, 2024

Frankenfield was hired in August and has been an outspoken advocate for residents of the public housing complex Holly Plaza, who lost their homes following widespread mold contamination in late 2023.

Funding will help people who have been imprisoned more successfully reenter their communities

[Annette Weston-Riggs](#)

February 14, 2024

Officials with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services said the FIT Wellness program provides psychiatric and physical health care services and connections to community supports like housing, transportation and phones for people in the state prison system who have serious mental illness.

Salad kits recalled for possible listeria contamination

[Annette Weston-Riggs](#)

February 14, 2024

Listeria can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail or elderly people and others with weakened immune systems.

NC lawmakers considering ban on "gas station heroin"

[WUNC](#)

February 14, 2024

Tianeptine is marketed as a dietary supplement under brand names like Za-Za and Neptune's Fix. But it's also been referred to as "gas station heroin".

Governor issues executive order to protect and restore North Carolina's natural resources

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 14, 2024

Governor Roy Cooper called Executive Order No. 305 “the most significant executive action to protect the state’s ecosystems since Governor Jim Hunt launched the “Million Acre Initiative” in 1999.”

Early voting for March primary begins tomorrow

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 14, 2024

All voters will have to show an acceptable form of photo identification in order to vote.

NC GOP Senator votes in favor of military help to Ukraine

WFAE

February 14, 2024

U.S. Senator Thom Tillis said voting against the package could be catastrophic, especially for North Carolina.

Fatal crash on NC 12 near stretch closed by overwash

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 14, 2024

One person was killed in a crash on Ocracoke Island Tuesday just north of the overwash area that has shut down North Carolina Highway 12.

Class project leads to evacuation of ECU dorm

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 14, 2024

The investigation began after a post on SnapChat.

PRE News

Jazz, funk legend Dick Knight performs free concert in Kinston

Ryan Shaffer

February 14, 2024

Born in Georgia, Knight came to Kinston at 19 years old, right as the city was booming with talented jazz, funk and soul musicians.

ENC federal prosecutor expanding investigation into white collar crimes

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 12, 2024

U.S. Attorney Michael Easley said the nation is facing ever-increasing frauds and scams, so his office has strengthened relationships with more than 20 agencies investigating white-collar crime in the region.

Turkeys at ENC farm test positive for bird flu

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 12, 2024

Turkeys at a Lenoir County commercial farm have tested positive for High Path Avian Influenza.

Lawyers ask for more time for arguments in Leandro case

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 12, 2024

The Leandro case returns to the state Supreme Court on Feb. 22, and lawyers representing plaintiffs and the North Carolina Department of Justice say they need the added time because the case is complex and includes several parties.

U.S. Coast Guard helps N.C. rescue get rehabbed sea turtles to warmer waters

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 12, 2024

Most of the turtles that are being released were stunned by the cold in December and January, but one is a young female loggerhead they named Titanite, who was taken the facility last July with several shark bite wounds, including an amputated flipper.

Sting ray at NC aquarium pregnant without access to male ray, by either asexual reproduction or mating with shark

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 12, 2024

The ray lives at the Aquarium & Shark Lab by Team ECCO in Hendersonville, and they discovered she was expecting about three months ago. It was a bit of a surprise because there are no male rays in her tank.

North Carolina could lose half of funds for victims services if Congress doesn't act

Ryan Shaffer

February 9, 2024

The North Carolina Attorney General is calling on Congress to spend more on a fund that compensates those affected by crime.

Gov. Cooper calls to end school voucher program at Greenville event Thursday

Kelly Batchelor

February 9, 2024

He said state funds should not go toward "unaccountable and unregulated" private schools until North Carolina's public schools are fully funded.

Wilson step closer to minor league baseball team, ACC to host several tournaments in NC

Ryan Shaffer

February 9, 2024

A regional round-up of sports news.

State launches program to help foster children still sleeping in DSS offices

Ryan Shaffer

February 9, 2024

At any one time, an average of 32 children are staying at DSS offices statewide.

U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland visits ENC to announce water, land restoration projects

Ryan Shaffer

February 9, 2024

In North Carolina, projects include cleaning up abandoned mines in Appalachia and nearly \$1.5 million to restore the Scuppernon River Boardwalk at the Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Tyrrell County.

Small airplane manufacturer coming to Elizabethtown

Kelly Batchelor

February 8, 2024

Sovereign Aerospace will invest just over \$4 million to manufacture, sell, and service personal aircraft in Elizabethtown.

Environmental groups argue against Duke Energy solar rules changes at appeals court

David Boraks, WFAE

February 8, 2024

Duke Energy is seeking to lower what solar customers get paid for excess electricity sent to the power grid and to require a new \$10 monthly rooftop solar fee.

LISTEN • 1:12

Proposed project to expand walkways, biking in New Bern, NCDOT asks for public input

Ryan Shaffer

February 8, 2024

NC Science Museum in Greenville reopens in historic building downtown

Ryan Shaffer

February 8, 2024

The museum is celebrating two new expansions this month. Last weekend, it reopened at a new site downtown, and this weekend, the museum will celebrate a new visitor's center at Contentnea Creek in Grifton.

PRE Morning News Brief

Ryan Shaffer

February 7, 2024

The latest PRE headlines from around the region and state.

Beaufort settles with former police officer in alleged harassment lawsuit

Ryan Shaffer

February 7, 2024

After 3 years of litigation, the Town of Beaufort has settled with former Sergeant Angela O'Neal in an alleged harassment and employment discrimination case.

Dredging starts at Cape Lookout National Seashore

Ryan Shaffer

February 7, 2024

The \$7 million project will make routes to and from the site safer and more accessible, and the dredged sand will be used in beach nourishment projects.

State Charter School Board looks to strip licenses from low-performing schools

Ann Doss Helms, WFAE

February 7, 2024

Last year 62 of North Carolina's 211 charter schools were rated as low performing or continuously low performing, and state officials want to bring that number down.

PRE News

State commissioner rejects proposed homeowner's insurance hike

Ryan Shaffer

February 7, 2024

North Carolina's top insurance regulator has rejected the industry's request for a 42% average increase in homeowners' insurance premiums.

A fix to an affordable housing crisis? Greensboro's bold incentive program

WFDD

February 6, 2024

Greensboro announced a \$21 million fund to incentive new affordable housing developments. City officials call housing in one of the state's fastest growing cities a crisis.

Agriculture commissioner warns of disappearing farmland

Ryan Shaffer

February 6, 2024

The agriculture industry is a major economic driver in North Carolina, but Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler says the industry is at risk of losing 20% of its farmland by 2040.

U.S. Forest Service plans projects at Croatan National Forest

Ryan Shaffer

February 6, 2024

The proposed plan includes improvements to several recreation sites and resiliency projects.

Redlining in NC: State and federal DOJ reach settlement with First National Bank

Kelly Batchelor

February 6, 2024

First National Bank settled for \$13.5 million in a redlining and lending discrimination case affecting residents in Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

Judge condemns distortions of Jan. 6 rioters as 'political prisoners' while sentencing NC resident

The Associated Press

February 6, 2024

Judges appointed by presidents from both political parties have described the riot as an affront to democracy. In a recent ruling, a U.S. District judge condemned the depiction by Trump and others that Jan. 6 defendants are "political prisoners" and "hostages."

Study shows those stationed at Camp Lejeune from 1975-85 have much higher risk for many cancers

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

Federal health officials say the study found military personnel stationed at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune from 1975 to 1985 had at least a 20% higher risk for a number of cancers.

Final NTSB report indicates pilot error as the cause of 2022 Down East plane crash

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

The report said the pilot became so fixated on entering flight plan information that the aircraft's pitch increased, while its airspeed dropped. That caused the plane to stall and drop into the ocean.

Record number of NC students earned credentials in career and technical education in 2022/23

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

Last school year, more than 325,000 high school students in North Carolina earned credentials in career and technical education for careers that don't require a traditional college degree.

NC governor files brief in Supreme Court review of medication abortion case

February 1, 2024

Governor Roy Cooper said more than five million people have used the safe, effective medication since the FDA approved it and he called the case an extremist, political attempt to take away women's freedom to make their own private medical decisions.

NCSHP dispatch system upgrades are expected to get troopers on-scene more quickly

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol will soon be able to immediately track a 9-1-1 call with GPS and pinpoint the nearest trooper, after an upgrade to the agency's statewide computer-aided dispatch system.

\$1 million grant will fund acquisition of nearly 900 acres along the Newport River for preservation

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

It's the final phase of a three-phase effort to protect almost 3,000 acres with scenic, recreational and ecological value along the river which includes maritime forest, managed pine stands, bottomland hardwoods and coastal marsh.

Report: Dropouts decrease, incidents of crime and violence increase in NC public schools

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

The report showed more than 13,000 acts of crime and violence, about 2,000 more than the year before. Drug possession was the most frequently reported incident, followed by possession of a weapon.

North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher now caring for 6 cold-stunned Kemp's ridley sea turtles

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

A total of 200 cold-stunned sea turtles that have been in the care of the three North Carolina Aquariums in recent weeks.

Become a volunteer for the Pony Patrol at Cape Lookout National Seashore

Annette Weston-Riggs

February 1, 2024

Pony Patrol volunteers will work three to four-hour shifts, walking Rachel Carson Reserve and Shackleford Banks and talking with visitors about how to best experience the beauty and natural behavior of the horses.

Downtown Kinston Revitalization rebuilding after wave of sudden resignations

Ryan Shaffer

February 1, 2024

The organization manages hundreds of thousands of dollars in public funds and has a history of frequent turnover. At its latest meeting, the new board took steps to address public concerns.

Gas main work reduces part of southbound Trent Road in New Bern to one lane

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 31, 2024

Piedmont Natural Gas officials say the southbound lane of Trent Road from Queen Anne to Chattawka will be closed, and traffic diverted into the center turn lane, as they work to move a gas main.

Civil rights group says North Carolina public schools harming LGBTQ+ students, violating federal law

The Associated Press

January 31, 2024

The complaint also alleges that the board and the department have failed to provide guidance to districts on how to enforce the laws without violating Title IX, which forbids discrimination based on sex in education.

Meetings underway across NC to validate returned ballots for this year's primaries

Rusty Jacobs, WUNC

January 31, 2024

Requested absentee ballots started getting sent out on January 19th.

State education leaders say students and teachers stand to benefit from the use of AI in the classroom

Amy Diaz, WFDD

January 31, 2024

At a meeting on Monday of the state's House Select Committee on Education Reform, officials discussed the new guidelines regarding AI in schools.

Man wanted for murdering his wife may be in Kinston

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 31, 2024

Donald Hodges, who also uses the names Tyrone Evans and Unique Hodges, is wanted for the shooting death of his wife in May 2022 in Conover.

Duplin County child taken by non-custodial mother found and is safe

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 31, 2024

Callie Holloman was taken from a home on Joe Johnson Road in Warsaw.

North Carolina joins an effort to improve outcomes for freed prisoners

Gary D. Robertson, Associated Press

January 30, 2024

Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper signed an executive order Monday that seeks to reduce recidivism through formal training and workforce tools for incarcerated people so more can succeed once they are freed.

Colonial Capital Humane Society in New Bern opens new facility

Ryan Shaffer

January 30, 2024

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony over the weekend, volunteers at the animal shelter celebrated their new \$2.2 million facility.

A new plan to protect endangered bat species in western North Carolina

Ryan Shaffer

January 30, 2024

The Virginia big-eared bat primarily resides in Avery and Watauga counties and is listed on both state and federal endangered species lists.

Onslow County breaks ground on emergency services extension

Kelly Batchelor

January 30, 2024

The \$14 million extension is for its existing building on North Commons Drive and is funded through the American Rescue Plan Act.

North Carolina political leaders weigh in on Texas border dispute

Ryan Shaffer

January 30, 2024

Republicans are backing Texas Governor Greg Abbott as he defies federal authority and the Supreme Court in re-erecting razor wire on the border. Democrats appear split on immigration policy.

Record 2,000 businesses, agencies reported data breaches last year

Ryan Shaffer

January 29, 2024

The total number of North Carolinians affected reached 4.9 million, the second-highest in history.

Lane shifts required for Havelock bypass construction over next few weeks as project nears completion

Kelly Batchelor

January 29, 2024

Expect delays over the few weeks as lanes in both directions will close temporarily in order to install a pipe underneath the pipe. Construction on the bypass began in 2019, and is expected to finish later this year.

Federal judge upholds NC state Senate maps in Voting Rights Act case

Gary Robertson, AP

January 29, 2024

Every Senate seat is critical for Republicans as they seek to retain their veto-proof majority in the chamber. The two current senators representing the region are Republicans and a ruling favoring the plaintiffs would likely ensure a Democrat winning one of the seats.

Should Venmo, CashApp be regulated like other financial institutions?

Bradley George

January 26, 2024

Nearly 75% of American adults use digital payment platforms like PayPal and CashApp, but their accounts on these apps are uninsured.

Carolina Panthers select new head coach

Associated Press

January 26, 2024

The Panthers offered the job to Dave Canales, offensive coordinator for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Canales will be the seventh head coach to lead the Panthers since 2018.

FAFSA day tomorrow to help hundreds of families with financial aid forms

Brianna Atkinson, WUNC

January 26, 2024

FAFSA is a federal student aid program, and on Saturday, dozens of colleges will help families fill it out as part of FAFSA day.

State Health Plan removes coverage for weight-loss drugs

Ryan Shaffer

January 26, 2024

More than 25,000 people on the State Health Plan will lose coverage for drugs like Wegovy and Saxenda.

First Lady Jill Biden to visit North Carolina today

Rusty Jacobs, WUNC

January 26, 2024

Jill Biden will make stop by Forsyth Technical Community College to talk about the economy. Her visit marks the third high-profile visit by the White House in recent weeks.

Herbert Coward, actor in 'Deliverance' dies in Western NC car crash

Associated Press

January 26, 2024

Herbert Coward is known for his "Toothless Man" role in John Boorman's 1972 classic "Deliverance."

Greenville, New Bern each closer to attaining collegiate sports teams

Ryan Shaffer

January 25, 2024

The two cities have spent months attracting collegiate summer teams.

RFK Jr. seeks signatures to appear on North Carolina presidential ballot

Ryan Shaffer

January 25, 2024

The environmental lawyer and anti-vaccine activist appeared in Raleigh for a rally last week. He announced a run for president early last year.

State outlines roadmap for boosting caregiving workforce, as shortage continues

Ryan Shaffer

January 25, 2024

The report looks at nursing assistants, behavioral health specialists and direct care aides. It recommends expanding training programs, increasing pay and reducing burnout.

State safety regulators routinely lower employer penalties in workplace deaths, says Charlotte Observer investigation

Ryan Shaffer

January 25, 2024

Businesses can request lower penalties, and often receive them, in exchange for implementing better standards. The Charlotte Observer analyzed data from 2022-23.

After historic sewer overflow, Havelock and Sound Rivers to host public meeting in February

Ryan Shaffer

January 24, 2024

Cleanup continues, and according to Havelock officials, the challenge will be cleaning up the woods and marsh where most of the sewage settled.

NC Wildlife Resources Commission proposes extending deer, bear hunting seasons

January 24, 2024

The state Wildlife Resources Commission says its goal is to better control the populations of bear and deer.

A hundred cold-stunned sea turtles found on North Carolina's beaches.

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 24, 2024

The turtles were found on Cape Lookout National Seashore and taken to rehabilitation centers.

AG Stein asks federal government to restrict AI in telemarketing

Ryan Shaffer

January 24, 2024

Attorney General Josh Stein is asking federal regulators to "take artificial intelligence out of scam callers' playbooks."

Preparations underway for conference focused on rehabilitation of those who have been convicted of crimes

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 23, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Adult Corrections is asking organizations to submit a proposal the present at the 2024 Rehabilitation and Reentry Conference in Raleigh in April.

Last week's half-million gallon untreated wastewater spill believed to be the largest ever in Havelock

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 23, 2024

Neuse Riverkeeper Samantha Krop said the city has been working hard to address the problem, and Sound Rivers recognizes that progress does not come without its setbacks.

North Carolina AG sues company for running "illegal debt-relief scheme"

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 23, 2024

Attorney General Josh Stein said Strategic Financial Solutions collected hundreds of millions of dollars in illegal fees from unsuspecting people who wanted help with their debts.

Renovations about to begin at Cape Hatteras Lighthouse

Bradley George

January 23, 2024

The National Park Service says visitors will enjoy better access to the lighthouse with wider walkways and more historical interpretation features.

Governor, house minority leader warn of possible increased restrictions on abortions in NC

WUNC

January 23, 2024

The ruling guaranteed a woman's right to an abortion. It was overturned by the court in 2022, leading to some Republican-controlled states restricting abortions.

Judge blocks tighter rule on same-day registration in North Carolina elections

Associated Press

January 23, 2024

The preliminary injunction from U.S. District Judge Thomas Schroeder tells elections workers they can't nullify ballots by screening citizens who register and immediately vote during a 17-day period before a primary or general election through an altered method unless applicant protections are created.

ENC officials travel to Raleigh to protest proposed massive homeowners insurance rate hike

Ryan Shaffer

January 23, 2024

The proposal from insurance companies averages 42% statewide, but it's nearly double for people on the coast.

LISTEN • 0:48

Response to lawsuit by property management company blames Holly Plaza illnesses on drug use

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 22, 2024

The operators of Holly Plaza, Pendergraph Management, filed a response late last week to the civil class action lawsuit filed by the low-income complex's former residents.

ENC park shares video of alligators in brumation - a little like suspended animation - during cold snap

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 22, 2024

An outdoor adventure area in eastern North Carolina is also a recue for alligators, and shared a unique video on Facebook amid the chilly weekend temperatures.

A never-before-seen Civil War archive with ties to Goldsboro unearthed

Ryan Shaffer

January 19, 2024

The previously unknown archive contains letters detailing the action and personal thoughts of members of the Baker Family, whose sons fought for the Confederacy, just as the war was coming to an end.

Local Government Roundup - Jan. 18, 2024

Ryan Shaffer

January 19, 2024

A look at some of the stories coming out of town halls and board rooms across Eastern North Carolina.

Biden visits North Carolina, a state he hopes to win in November, to promote internet access

Associated Press

January 19, 2024

President Joe Biden on Thursday unveiled \$82 million for North Carolina to help connect 16,000 new households and businesses to high-speed internet, delivering an election-year pitch about policies he says are "just getting started" at improving the United States.

State Treasurer asks commission approve a "line-of-duty" death for Greensboro Police Sgt. Nix

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

Nix, a 23-year veteran of the department, was killed on Dec. 30 while trying to stop a robbery at a convenience store in Greensboro. He was off-duty at the time.

Proposals before the state labor department would bring back masking and social distancing at work

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

The Department of Labor said the rulemaking process is underway, but no decisions have been finalized. They will take public comment for 60 days.

Cooper urges Congress to extend act that provides nearly 900,000 in NC with affordable internet

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

The act provides eligible households a monthly discount on high-speed internet service of \$30 per month or more, and a one-time \$100 discount toward a laptop, desktop computer or tablet.

State releases guide for using AI in schools

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

The document notes that many schools initially blocked the use of such programs, but it says teachers and students need to learn to use AI tools responsibly.

Mom was right; small grain of truth to adage that you'll catch a cold by going out without a coat

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

When you get cold, your body's immune system may just drop a little bit because it's spending extra effort to keep you warm. "That's not with everybody, but, in some cases, it may predispose you to a cold."

ENC nonprofit raises White Flag to help unhoused people escape the bitter cold, volunteers needed

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 19, 2024

The Onslow Community Outreach White Flag shelter allows people to sleep on any extra cots that they can put up and they'll also get a warm shower and a hot meal.

New statewide health plan would provide behavioral health services for children enrolled in Medicaid

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

Health and Human Services Secretary Kody H. Kinsley said, "Too many children are struggling to access the mental health care and support they need to thrive — stuck in cycles of conflict at school, in emergency rooms without access to necessary care and sleeping in child welfare offices."

Biden will promote internet access in North Carolina, a state he hopes to win in the 2024 election

Associated Press

January 18, 2024

President Joe Biden is going to North Carolina on Thursday to highlight \$82 million in new investments that would connect 16,000 households and businesses to high-speed internet.

Sheriff: protect your pets during weekend cold snap

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

North Carolina state law and Craven County ordinances say that all companion animals be provided shelter from the elements and that pets have access to food and water.

ENC man accused of forging a certificate that said he was a certified firefighter

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

North Carolina Insurance Commissioner Mike Causey said Anthony Osborne of Windsor was charged with common law forgery, common law uttering and attempting to obtain property by false pretense.

Carteret County providing free photo ID for voters

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

North Carolina's voter photo ID requirement went into effect in August, so voters in the March primary will have to show identification.

City council opposes the use of tolls to finance replacement of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

Council member Luke Waddell challenged the North Carolina Department of Transportation to come up with a more viable funding option for a new bridge.

Line break sends 500,000 gallons of untreated wastewater into east prong of Slocum Creek in Havelock

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

A half-million gallons of untreated wastewater spilled from a broken underground line in Havelock on Sunday.

State health officials report 24 more flu deaths, but hospitalizations were down sharply

Jason deBruyn, WUNC

January 18, 2024

Nearly two-thirds of those deaths are in the elderly population of 65 and older, though there have been 7 pediatric deaths as well.

Insurance commissioner talks about homeowners insurance rate increase proposal in visit to Harkers Island

Ryan Shaffer

January 18, 2024

Insurance companies are asking for a 42% average increase for homeowners insurance for North Carolinians, but the request must be approved by the state insurance commissioner. Homeowners on coast could pay double their current premiums.

ECU toxicologist cautioning people to use heating sources wisely during weekend Arctic cold snap

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 18, 2024

According to the National Institutes of Health, about 1,200 people die in the U.S. from accidental CO poisoning annually and more than 100,000 people visit the emergency department each year.

Compost companies to see big boost as sales are tax-free to farmers this year

Ryan Shaffer

January 12, 2024

Compost is a big industry in North Carolina that has steadily — and quietly — grown for decades. A new law incentivizes the industry by eliminating the sales tax on compost for farmers.

Sinkhole closes road near the Duplin-Lenoir county line until March

Kelly Batchelor

January 12, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Transportation says Jimmy Lee Road near the Duplin-Lenoir county line is closed after a sinkhole formed over a deteriorating drainage pipe.

Thin Blue Line Act would increase penalty for harming law enforcement to life in prison or death

Sharryse Piggott, WUNC

January 12, 2024

North Carolina U.S. Senator Thom Tillis is calling for tougher penalties for criminals who intentionally harm law enforcement officers, following the death of Greensboro Police Sergeant Philip Dale Nix.

NC police officer killed while stopping a gas station robbery laid to rest

Sharryse Piggott, WUNC

January 12, 2024

Sergeant Philip Dale Nix served as a Greensboro police officer for over 20 years and was the longest serving sergeant in the department's family Victims Unit.

Controlled burns begin this month in ENC longleaf pine forests

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 12, 2024

Frequent, low-intensity fires knock back shrubs and other vegetation—allowing plants like Venus flytraps to thrive on the forest floor. Some plants need fire for their very existence.

Just under 2,000 balloons, dangerous for sea life, were picked up at an NC national park last year

January 12, 2024

Balloons can impact sea life because they break down into small pieces of brightly colored plastic that look like food and are often eaten by wildlife.

Third ENC tornado Tuesday night confirmed, this one near Ernul

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 12, 2024

Meteorologists in Newport say the EF1, with peak winds of 90 mph, formed along Highway 17 near Ernul at about 8 pm.

Friday evening winds could have greater impact because of Tuesday's storm impact on ENC

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 12, 2024

It's expected to include strong winds, especially along the coast where a wind advisory is in effect tonight for gusts of 45-50 mph.

Man who was wrongly imprisoned for 44 years gets \$750,000

Associated Press

January 11, 2024

The settlement, which will end a wrongful incarceration lawsuit filed by attorneys for Ronnie Wallace Long in 2021, also included a public written apology from the city of Concord for its role in his imprisonment.

North Carolina set a new all-time high for COVID-19 particles detected in wastewater

Jason deBruyn, WUNC

January 11, 2024

The state health department measures COVID-19 particles in wastewater to get a sense of how much virus is circulating across the state. The new record means there is more virus spreading now than at any point in the history of the pandemic.

NCDMV to open pared down Express License Plate Agency in Jacksonville, two months after closure

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 11, 2024

The North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles closed the previous location nearly two months ago, under allegations of contact violations by the previous owner, but now officials say a temporary LPA “express” office will open on Jan. 17.

Masks required at CarolinaEast Health System

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 11, 2024

Most visitors and patients will have to mask up before going into CarolinaEast Health System in New Bern.

Jacksonville astronaut's fly-by on the moon delayed by a year

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 11, 2024

NASA said anomalies during the unmanned Artemis I test mission prompted the delays because of crew safety worries, including the unexpected loss of pieces from the Orion spacecraft's heat shield as well as a battery issue and challenges with a circuitry responsible for air ventilation and temperature control.

Shopping center evacuated after homemade explosives, a weapon and meth were found in parked car

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 11, 2024

While they were checking on the man in the Food Lion parking lot, officers with the Washington Police Department found meth and the weapon. Officials say there were also homemade explosives in the vehicle.

Another storm coming; animal protective service officers ask pet owners to check their fences

Annette Weston-Riggs

January 11, 2024

Meteorologists from the National Weather Service in Newport say impacts could include severe wind gusts and heavy rain. They add that an isolated tornado cannot be ruled out yet.

PRE Newsbrief — Jan. 4, 2023

Ryan Shaffer

January 4, 2024

Respiratory disease hospitalizations surpass last winters numbers, students make gains toward eliminating pandemic learning losses, and CEO of AMC Theaters flies to Greenville after controversy at a local theater.

Rev. Barber meets with AMC CEO after being escorted out of its Greenville theater last week

Ryan Shaffer

January 4, 2024

The CEO of AMC theaters met with Bishop William Barber II, a civil rights activist who was escorted by police out of one of the company's theaters in Greenville last week.

NFL fines Panthers owner David Tepper \$300,000 for tossing drink at Jaguars fans

Associated Press

January 4, 2024

The NFL has fined Carolina Panthers owner David Tepper \$300,000 for tossing a drink at fans in Florida toward the end of a game on Sunday.

Students making gains in reading and math, but not enough to offset pandemic losses

Ryan Shaffer

January 4, 2024

NCDPI's annual report was largely positive, saying students statewide are on track to redress pandemic learning loss, according to state test scores over the last two years.

Sports betting to start later than expected in NC

Ryan Shaffer

January 3, 2024

The earliest start date set by law is January 9th, but the state says online sportsbooks won't be available until after the Super Bowl in early February.

ECU polls finds Robinson leads GOP field for governor, though most Republican voters are undecided

Ryan Shaffer

January 3, 2024

With just two months until the primaries, a poll out of ECU shows Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson is decidedly leading in the GOP primary for governor, but that half of GOP voters are still undecided.