

The Daily Reflector



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Accessible classics



PHOTOS BY JULIETTE COOKE/THE DAILY REFLECTOR

Mike Ernest places classic childrens books on the shelves behind the registers for customers to purchase and donate to Pitt County Schools during a book drive at Barnes & Noble on Wednesday. Below: Some of the classic children's books line the shelves behind the registers that can be bought by customers and donated.

Book drive puts literature in children's hands

BY BRIAN WUDKWyCH
The Daily Reflector

With the holiday season unofficially underway, a first-year partnership between Pitt County Schools and Barnes & Noble is helping give donated books to local children in need.

Greenville Barnes & Noble customers can choose to donate Sterling Classic books — which are \$6.95 but can cost as low as \$4.99 with promotional offers — or they can choose a childhood favorite of their own.

The book drive started yesterday and runs until



Dec. 31, when the books will be distributed to students around the county by the school system.

The Sterling Classics include "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "Gulliver's Travels," "Peter Pan," and more, all of which are displayed behind the checkout counter. Customers are asked if they would like to donate during checkout, and are

able to select which book they prefer to give.

Jessica Lawrence, Barnes & Noble community business development manager, said the classic collections are timeless and well known, which makes them ideal for book drives. Though this year's book drive is geared towards children aged eight to 12, Lawrence said the books are good for kids of all ages.

"The great things about classics is the story never gets old and the older siblings, once they learn how to read it, can read them to

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Greenville business sells \$4 million scratch-off ticket

Shingleton's win on \$20 ticket has been talk of Red Oak Grill and Grocery.

BY GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Reflector

A Greenville business sold a \$4 million lottery ticket to a Snow Hill man, the N.C. Education Lottery announced.

Edward Shingleton won the top prize of \$4 million in the \$4,000,000 Platinum Payout scratch-off game after purchasing the \$20 ticket at the Red Oak Grill and Grocery,

See LOTTERY, A7

Open enrollment underway for health care marketplace

BY MICHAEL ABRAMOWITZ
The Daily Reflector

The Affordable Care Act remains the law, and the health care marketplace open enrollment period has begun after Congress was unable to agree on a plan to repeal and replace it.

The ACA's fifth — and shortest — open-enrollment period began yesterday. Qualified consumers will have until midnight on Dec. 15 to enroll in 2018 coverage through the health insurance marketplace. The 45-day window is half the length of past enrollment periods.

"The most important message for consumers: 'Do not delay,'" Jennifer Simmons, director of the NC

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FROM PAGE ONE



A damaged SUV is towed away after a collision with a Greenville Fire-Rescue SUV at the intersection of Arlington Boulevard and Memorial Drive on Wednesday.

JULIETTE COOKE/THE DAILY REFLECTOR

Wreck involves Fire-Rescue vehicle

Pair of SUVs collide at intersection of Memorial Drive and Arlington Boulevard.

BY GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Reflector

Greenville police still are looking into what led to a Wednesday wreck between two SUVs, one driven by a Greenville Fire-

Rescue shift supervisor.

The incident happened about 1 p.m. at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Arlington Boulevard, said Greenville Police Department spokeswoman Kristen Hunter.

A shift supervisor with Battalion 1 was traveling west on Arlington Boulevard responding to a fire call in the area of Briarcliff Drive, according to police

and fire officials. At the intersection with Memorial Drive, the fire-rescue vehicle collided with a sport utility vehicle traveling south on Memorial Drive.

The SUV driver and firefighter were transported to Vidant Medical Center with non-life-threatening injuries, police said. The shift supervisor was cleared and back on duty later in the day, said Greenville Fire-

Rescue spokeswoman Rebekah Thurston.

Debris from the wreck also damaged a car stopped at the intersection. That person was not injured, police said.

Westbound traffic on Arlington continued to travel freely after the wreck, but eastbound Arlington traffic was rerouted through the gas station parking lot for about 45 minutes.

MARKETPLACE

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Navigator Consortium, the state's largest and only statewide navigator group, said. "Given the shortened enrollment period, it's more important than ever for consumers to act now."

Analysis of government data by the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation runs counter to the perception of staggering across-the-board increases in costs for consumers under the Affordable Care Act, the AP reported. The study found that in 1,540 counties a hypothetical 40-year-old making \$25,000 a year can get a basic "bronze" plan under the ACA next year for zero monthly premium.

It's partly a result of administration actions that raised the underlying cost of insurance, leading to higher federal spending for premium subsidies.

On Oct. 12 Trump signed an executive order that shut off government subsi-

dies to insurers for providing lower copays and deductibles to people with modest incomes. But insurers have raised premiums, which also are subsidized.

Think of pushing down on one end of a see-saw and the other end goes up.

Because consumers can use their premium subsidy to buy any level of coverage, that money can be enough to cover the full price of a lower-cost bronze plan. This year, consumers in some areas had access to zero-premium bronze plans, but Gary Claxton, a co-author of the report, said that for 2018 the plan will be available to many more people.

"Because of the way that premiums are set this year, people have to shop around to make sure they are getting a plan that makes sense for them," Claxton said. "Telling people that the choice is to pay a penalty (for being uninsured) or take a free plan, is a pretty attractive proposition."

Bronze plans are not for everybody, since they typically have annual deductibles of \$6,000 or more, according to the AP report. But they may appeal to younger people or those who expect to have just a few doctor visits in a year.

Rising premium subsidies also can make "gold" plans more affordable. Those offer a higher level of coverage, comparable to what employers provide.

Financial assistance still is available to consumers to help pay their premiums. When the cost of premiums goes up, so does the amount of financial assistance available. All plans still cover essential health benefits — from hospital visits to long-term wellness care.

North Carolina's Affordable Care Act navigators are geared up for the start of the enrollment period. The NC Navigator Consortium issued a statement that it is receiving \$2,444,703 in federal funding to provide outreach,

education and enrollment assistance during the open enrollment period. The U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services awarded the grant to consortium leader Legal Aid of North Carolina.

In Greenville, nonprofit Access East, Inc., found online at AccessEast.org, offers Marketplace Health Insurance enrollment assistance across the same coverage area. Those needing coverage can call 847-3027 or call toll-free at 1-855-733-3711 with questions or to schedule an appointment with a navigator. Consumers can also schedule appointments with a navigator online at GetCoveredAmerica.org.

"It's important for consumers to... start the enrollment process early," said Mark Van Arnam, consortium outreach director. "Comparing plans, applying for financial help and completing enrollment can be a multi-step process. If you have questions, connect with a navigator as soon as possible."

LOTTERY

Continued from A1

Since news of the win broke, lots of people having been coming in and talking about the ticket, Eid said. A few unfamiliar faces stopped in Tuesday morning and purchased tickets, he said.

"I sold a lot more this morning than I normally do," he said. "They are buying the \$20 tickets mostly."

The \$4,000,000 Platinum Payout game began in September 2016 with three prizes of \$4 million and five \$1 million prizes. One \$4 million prize and two \$1 million prizes remain, the release said.

Singleton had the choice of taking a \$4 million annuity that has 20 payments of \$200,000 a year, or a lump sum of \$2.4 million. He chose the lump sum. After required state and federal tax withholdings, he took home \$1.67 million.

The owner of Red Oak Grill also will receive a \$10,000 incentive, a lottery spokesman said. The incentive award is available for instant games that have a top prize of \$1 million or greater.

Eid said he hopes the benefit of the sale extends between the award.

"I'm hoping business will pick up. Right now they are trying to put a light next to our store because of the car accidents going on," Eid said. "I hope business will pick up better because

they've blocked one of the entrances of our store."

Pitt County government has directly received \$22,926,375 from the lottery since 2009, said Michael Emory, Pitt County spokesman. That includes \$1.6 million received during fiscal year 2016. The money has been used to fund construction projects for Pitt County Schools and Pitt Community College.

Along with funding for school construction, Pitt County education programs received an additional \$7 million in lottery funds as directed by the General Assembly.

This included nearly \$4.9 million for non-instructional support, which includes support staff such as office assistants, custodians and substitute teachers, according to the N.C. Education Lottery website. Nearly \$1.46 million in lottery money was used to provide pre-kindergarten programming for 277 Pitt County children.

More than 600 students received college scholarships funded by \$684,531.

Another \$245,958 in lottery money was used to fund grants that covered the costs of attending a UNC System school. Last year, 1,290 Pitt County students received grants, according to the lottery website.

Contact Ginger Livingston at givingston@reflector.com or 252-329-9570. Follow her on Twitter @GingerLGDR.

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