

## MAKING HISTORY COVID-19

As many North Carolinians remained unemployed or underemployed due to the state's shutdown, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper issued Executive Order 184 on December 30th extending Executive Order 171 to assist persons in danger of being evicted from their homes. The order also aimed to facilitate the process of applying for unemployment benefits by changing procedures and rules at the Division of Employment Security. On January 6th, Cooper issued order #188 to extend the Modified Stay at Home order # 181 issued on December 8th from 5 p.m. on January 8, 2021 to 5 p.m. on January 29, 2021.

Despite the state's lockdown mandates and advisory precautions, coronavirus cases skyrocketed in December even as vaccine became available - due, in part, to indoor gatherings over the holidays. During a press conference on December 30th, Cooper urged high risk persons to stay at home and to depend upon deliveries for essentials such as medicine and food.

**Fighting COVID:** As COVID cases increased, local hospitals stretched to accommodate them. On January 1st, the *News-Topic* reported that Samaritan's Purse out of Boone, would set up a 30 bed field hospital in a parking lot at Caldwell Memorial Hospital in Lenoir. It would take care of COVID-19 patients referred by Caldwell UNC Health Care, Frye Regional Medical Center, Catawba Valley Medical Center, Carolinas HealthCare System Blue Ridge, and Appalachian Regional Health System. Samaritan's Purse would staff the facility with specially trained medical personnel and support staff. Set up began on Friday, January 1st, and they began treating patients on Thursday, January 7th.

(COVID-19 continued on page 2)



The photo above shows a view of the field hospital from the front parking lot at CMH. The location offers both privacy and security.



Photo by Chris Poteet

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING A Christmas Star

Planets orbit the sun at different speeds millions of miles a part. Using time as it is recorded on Earth, it takes one year for us to make a complete orbit, about 12 years for Jupiter, and about 29.5 years for Saturn. From time to time, planets can align in a way as to appear to be on top of each other from Earth. That is what happened with Jupiter and Saturn on December 21, 2020 about an hour after sunset. If you were in the Granite Falls area looking to the southwest, you could see the two planets appear to almost collide low in the sky shortly after 6 p.m. With a telescope you could see more details such as the rings around Saturn and moons around Jupiter. With certain filters and lenses, you could produce a photo showing a twinkling, pointed star instead of individual planets.

While Jupiter and Saturn align about every 20 years or so, an alignment this close that can be seen from Earth is rare. The last time it appeared this close for people to see was in 1226. Although they will align again in 2040 and 2060, it will be 2080 before the view will be as good as the one in 2020.

## A Granite Falls Star

The NFL announced on January 19, 2021 that Eric Church and Jazmine Sullivan would sing the National Anthem at Super Bowl LV on February 7th at the Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Florida. The performance will bring together two different sounds - his country music and her R & B/pop. CBS will begin broadcasting the Kickoff Show at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Kickoff at 6:30 p.m.

Eric, the son of Ken and Rita Church, is a native of Granite Falls and a graduate of South Caldwell High School.

**Vaccinations:** The photo on the right shows Metaleen Thomas receiving her first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at Caldwell Memorial Hospital in Lenoir on January 12th.



**Family Reunions:** Although COVID-19 prevented the Cline Family from holding its 2020 reunion, the planning committee succeeded in publishing an update to its history. The 202 page spiral bound book contains the previous version published in 2018 along with a new section about the Caldwell County Clines, additional oral histories (including two murders), and information about the accomplishments of various members of the family. It is interesting to note that DNA tests show that the Clines are related to Ötzi the Iceman, whose preserved body was found in 1991 after being frozen for 5,300 years.



Info and photo provided by Metaleen Thomas

The family self-published the books, and they are being sold without profit for \$28.00 each. As of mid-January, there were 60 available. Flash drives with the book

in .pdf format were available for \$12.00 each, but they sold out early. The family will likely have more made if there is a demand. To order, send a check payable to Moritz Klein/Cline Family Association, P O Box 3248, Hickory, N. C. 28603.

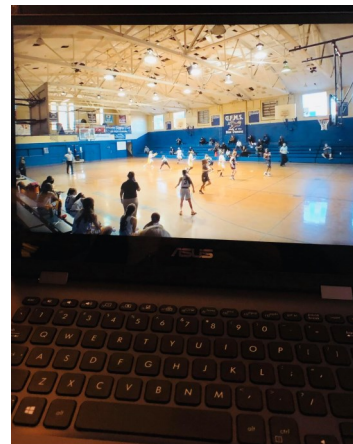
**Parks and Recreation:** The Granite Falls Parks and Recreation Department decided to start back sports with winter soccer. They accepted registrations through December 11th and schedule the first games for January 30th. There were four (4) coed teams divided by ages - 4 & 5, 6 & 7, 8 & 9, and 10, 11, & 12. If the weather permits, the three younger groups will play each Saturday through March 6th. The oldest group will play an extra day - March 13th.

**Churches:** While COVID-19 prevented Mount

Zion Baptist Church from hosting its annual Christmas Day meal, the church gave away 302 meal kits in a drive by event open to the general public on Sunday, December 20th.

**Schools:** Amidst growing COVID cases, Caldwell County Schools sought advice from the local health department about changing the school schedule. After much debate at a meeting on Wednesday, December 30th, board members voted to return grades K-5 to a four day per week in-person schedule. There would be remote learning on Wednesdays while schools were being cleaned. Upper grades would remain on a hybrid AB-AB schedule.

**School Sports:** Granite Falls Middle School played William Lenoir Middle School in the first basketball game of the season on Tuesday, January 12th in the historic GFMS gymnasium. Each player could have one parent present, and the games were live streamed on YouTube for other family members. The bleachers were marked with X's to assist people in socially distancing. Masks were also required. William Lenoir won the game by one point, 26-25.



Info and photo provided by Kendra Smith Winebarger

## TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS *And the Winners are...*

The Granite Falls Police Department presented the 2020 Telecommunicator of the Year Award to Jennifer Wheeling (below left) and the 2020 Officer of the Year Award to Travis Bentley (below right) on December 22nd. The town appreciates their service and the work they do to keep residents and visitors safe.





## CATCHING UP 2020 - *Etched in Granite, Volume II*

### ***New Route to Duke Street***

The intersection at Duke Street, South Main Street, and Central Avenue closed at the end of January 2020. The main access to Duke Street from South Main (aka Hwy 321A) is now located at Short Street, which is about .3 mile south of the old intersection. That access leads to a roundabout on Duke Street where it intersects with Hunters Creek Drive. Guard rails at the old intersection keep cars from crossing the railroad track. In addition, the side road that ran between the old Paradise Mill and the railroad track has been closed off at the intersection. Although traffic once used it for a short cut, the road is privately owned. Traffic can still access Duke Street and Central Avenue via Midway Street. The new route eliminates the old, unsafe intersection where traffic came from six different directions. Photos below show the closed intersection, the new intersection, and the new roundabout.



The photo above was made 1/17/21. It shows the site of the intersection that once connected South Main Street with Duke Street.



The above photo shows the access to Duke Street from South Main Street on 1/17/21.



The photo above shows the roundabout on Duke Street at Hunter Creek Drive on 1/17/21.



Chase and Kendra Winebarger hold the award he received on October 22, 2020.

### ***Top 10 Under 40***

Hickory Young Professionals chose Granite Falls resident Chase Winebarger as one of the Top 10 Under 40 in 2020. The award recognizes ten persons each year who are under the age of 40 for their career accomplishments and community leadership. Mr. Winebarger has been the town manager of Sawmills since December 2019. Prior to that, he served as the town manger of Catawba, as a bailiff in Caldwell County, and as a school resource officer. His community service includes membership in the Greater Hickory Metro Planning Organization, WPCOG Technical Coordinating Committee, Professional Conduct Committee for the North Carolina City and County Management Association, the North Carolina City Managers Association, and the International City Managers Association. He also coaches softball, teaches self-defense, and practices the martial art of jiu-jitsu. The award winner is married to the former Kendra Smith, and they have two children - Mallory and Tucker. They are active members of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, where he is a deacon.

### ***Museum/Historical Association Update***

Although the Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum remains closed due to COVID restrictions, regular updates have been made to its Facebook page and to its website - [www.granitefallshistorymuseum.org](http://www.granitefallshistorymuseum.org). Work is also continuing on the update to *Etched in Granite, the History of Granite Falls, North Carolina*.



# GRANITE FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL ON JANUARY 10, 2021

## *Keeping the Portals Wide for All Posterity*



*Tablet II* is a publication of the Granite Falls Historical Association, Inc. The purpose of the publication is to provide members with news and information about the Association along with articles and photos of historical interest. The purpose of the Association is to preserve and interpret the history/heritage of Granite Falls and Southern Caldwell County by historical preservation, publications, active museum and historical site programs, public meetings, and various activities related to these programs.

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For more information about the Granite Falls Historical Association, Inc and the Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum, go to the website - [www.granitefallshistorymuseum.org](http://www.granitefallshistorymuseum.org) or the Facebook page under "Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum."