



Dr. Caryl B. Burns

## MAKING HISTORY *New Mayor in Town*

On November 2, 2021, voters in the Town of Granite Falls elected Dr. Caryl Blair Burns to be the mayor and returned Martin D. Townsend and Larry Knight to their seats on the town council. Voters also chose Ritch Bolick to fill the council seat being vacated by Dr. Burns. They will begin four year terms of office on December 6, 2021 after taking their oaths of office. Burns is succeeding Barry Hayes, who announced his retirement after 38 years of service to the town (24 as mayor and 14 as a member of the Town Council).

The mayor-elect, a native of Granite Falls, has served on the town council since 1997. In 2019, she retired from Caldwell County Schools where she had been the Associate Superintendent of Educational Program Services. During her time with the school system, Dr. Burns also served as principal of two different schools (Granite Falls Middle and South Caldwell), as a teacher at Granite Falls High

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## SPECIAL EVENTS RETURN TO GRANITE FALLS *After Missing 2020 Due to the Pandemic*

Recognizing U. S. Military Veterans: The Seventh Annual Veterans Day Ceremony returned to Granite Falls on November 10, 2021 after being sidelined by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, but the town took precautions by holding the event outdoors on the tennis courts instead of in the gymnasium. The South Caldwell High School Wind Ensemble under the direction of Jason Childers played "The Washington Post" as a prelude to the program. Bill Schreiber emceed, the DAV Honor Guard Chapter 6 presented the colors, and the SCHS Chorus, Bella Voce, sang "The Star-Spangled Banner." Rev. Leo Fair gave the invocation, and Mayor Barry Hayes delivered a warm welcome and recognized veterans, members of the town council, and men who served on the Veterans Monument Committee.

Mr. Schreiber recognized the various branches of the



South Caldwell High School  
Wind Ensemble

(VETERANS DAY CEREMONY continued on page 2)



Festival on the Square: The 15th Annual Festival on the Square - Tree Lighting Ceremony was held on Monday, November 22nd downtown Granite Falls beginning at 6:15 p.m. The event featured the South Caldwell High School Jazz Band, the Sims Country Cloggers, the Granite Falls Middle School Band, the GFMS Chorus, and the SCHS Chorus. Eugene Crawley emceed, Santa made a special appearance, and Mayor Barry Hayes led the countdown to the tree lighting and first "snowfall" of the season.

The Town of Granite Falls took special precautions to protect residents and visitors. To lessen the spread of COVID, festival planners omitted the community chorus, the tree decorating contest, and booths where merchants/churches gave away free treats. On duty emergency services personnel and strategically placed town vehicles provided a secure environment in which to enjoy the Christmas season.

U. S. Armed Forces as the SCHS Wind Ensemble played “Marches of the Armed Forces.” Veteran speakers were Tim Gordon and Richard LaMotte. SMSgt LaMotte (USAF, retired) also sang “God Bless the USA.” Bella Voce, accompanied by the Wind Ensemble, sang “America the Beautiful.” SFC Brian Monroe (NC Army National Guard) recognized those Killed in Action and gave a moving tribute to veterans who had committed suicide by reciting “One of the Twenty Two.” Aiden and Addison Branham placed a wreath in memory of those killed in action, and Tripp Ryder from the SCHS Wind Ensemble played “Taps.” The SCHS Wind Ensemble played “Anchors Aweigh” as a postlude.

## HISTORY IN THE MAKING COVID-19

After peaking mid-October, COVID cases in North Carolina began a stock market descent, going up and down, but gradually declining along with the percentage of persons testing positive. Caldwell UNC Healthcare closed its drive-thru respiratory diagnostic clinic (RDC) at RiverCrest Medical Park on November 5th after being reopened less than a month.

**Vaccine:** On October 29, 2021, the FDA authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for children ages 5 to 11. On November 19, 2021, the CDC opened eligibility for booster shots to all persons ages 18 and over. They particularly urged boosters for those over 50 and for persons 18 and older who live in long term care facilities. Adults who had either the Pfizer-BioNTech or the Moderna vaccine may get boosters six months past their send shot. Persons who received the one dose Johnson and Johnson vaccine may get a booster 2 months later.

Vaccine mandates remained controversial, and litigation continued as many workers announced that would quit rather than comply.

**School:** On November 8, 2021, the school board decided they would allow face masks to be optional unless the COVID positivity rate for students and staff exceeded 0.5 percent within a three-week rolling average. The school system would announced the status of face masks on Fridays for the following week. The policy does not extend to school buses because transportation falls under a federal mandate.

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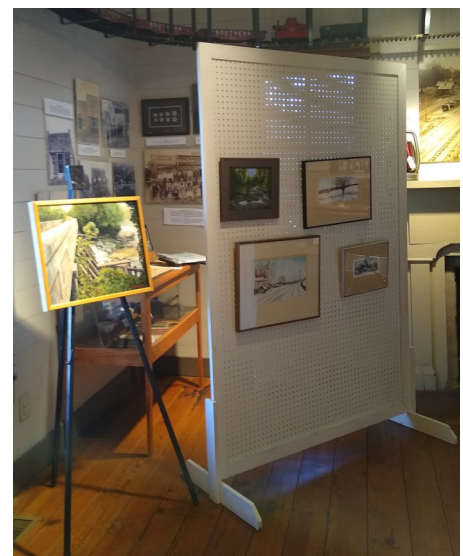
School, and in various positions at the Education Center where she implemented a public relations program and wrote grants that provided important funding for the schools. A graduate of Granite Falls High School, the mayor-elect earned a BA from Lenoir-Rhyne, a MA and an Ed.S. from Appalachian State University, and a Ed.D. from the UNC-Greensboro.

Since its incorporation in 1899, the Town of Granite Falls has been served by 22 different mayors. Dr. Caryl B. Burns, who will be #23, is making history as the second woman to be elected Mayor of Granite Falls. The first female mayor, Evelyn Kent, was elected to a two year term in 1952. She went on to serve as a member of the town council from 1954 - 1962.



## AT THE MUSEUM Art by Local Artists

An art show began at the museum on November 3rd and will conclude on Sunday, December 12, 2021 with a reception between 2 and 4 p.m. to honor the artists. The show features the work of Barbara Richards Williams, Dustin Turnmyre, Eddie Deitz, Joel Kaufman, Matthew L. Strawn, Norma Starnes Suddreth, Pamela Click, Sheila Pritchard, Sherry Reece, Steve Sebastian, and Donna Taylor. Some of the artists are willing to sell their pieces, and interested buyers may obtain their contact information from the History Committee so they can deal directly with the artists.



## SCENES FROM THE GRANITE FALLS VETERANS CEREMONY



Richard LaMotte  
photo by Jeanne Whisnant



Richard Cecil  
photo by Jeanne Whisnant



Brian Moore  
photo by Jeanne Whisnant



Tim Gordon



Barry Hayes

## FESTIVAL ON THE SQUARE - TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY



Left: South Caldwell  
High School Jazz  
Band



Right: Granite Falls  
Middle School Band



Left: Santa Claus



Right: Sims Country  
Cloggers



Left: South Caldwell  
High School Chorus



Right: Granite Falls  
Middle School Chorus

**Make some "Christmas Memories" in Granite Falls on Saturday, December 4, 2021 when the Rotary Club sponsors the 2021 Christmas Parade beginning at noon.**

# GRANITE FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL ON NOVEMBER 7, 2021

## *We'll Pray to Keep Thy Portals Wide for All Posterity*



November 21, 2021

During November 2021, workers began turning Mount Granite into a multi-purpose athletic field.



November 21, 2021



*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 (N. C.) History and Transportation Museum."