

A Publication of the Granite Falls Historical Association, Inc.



Lt. Cdr. Bill Schreiber, US Navy, ret.

2023 GRANITE FALLS VETERANS DAY CEREMONY *Honoring our Veterans*

The Town of Granite Falls hosted a special program on Thursday, November 9, 2023 to commemorate Veterans Day and to honor those who served our nation in the Armed Forces. Veterans received a commemorative bracelet and a copy of a proclamation issued by Mayor Caryl B. Burns designating November 10, 2023 as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veteran Day.” During the program, she welcomed those in attendance and recognized veterans who were present, active duty personnel and their families, members of the Veterans Monument Committee, and members of the Granite Falls Town Council.

Lt. Cdr. Bill Schreiber (U. S. Navy, retired) emceed the program, which was coordinated by Granite Falls Police Chief Brine Branham, a veteran of the North Carolina National Guard. Veteran speakers were Phillip Hefner (U. S. Air Force), Paul Kurts (U. S. Air Force), and Wayne Mihelich (U. S. Navy). Sgt. Michael Tackett (U. S. Army) honored service members who were killed in service to their country. The Caldwell County Sheriff’s Honor Guard

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FESTIVAL ON THE SQUARE *Getting Ready for Christmas*

Downtown Granite Falls was the scene of the Seventeenth Annual Festival on the Square and Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Monday, November 20. Attendees enjoyed free refreshments served by local businesses and churches amidst the beauty of 28 live Christmas trees decorated by local school groups and civic organizations as part of the “Light Up Granite Falls” campaign. Children gave their Christmas list to Santa Claus, who arrived from the North Pole in time for the event. Entertainment began at 6:15 p.m. The program featured the

(FESTIVAL ON THE SQUARE continued on page 3)



Tracy
Townsend



Mike
Mackie



Jim
Mackie

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS *The Results are In*

According to the official canvass conducted Thursday, November 17, the three top vote-getters in the election for Granite Falls Town Council were incumbents: Tracy Townsend (169), Mike Mackie (144), and Jim Mackie (132). They topped challengers Jamie Hagerty (129, up 1 from election night), Doug Dupell (80), Brandon Dupell (58), and Mario Mastroeli (51). There were 5 write-in votes. Winners of the election will take office the first Monday in December (12/4/2023) during a special meeting of the Town Council that will begin at 5 p.m.

DRY SPELL Stage 1 Drought

On November 1, the Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW-DMAG) announced that warm and dry weather had put the Catawba-Wateree River Basin in Stage 1 of 5 drought stages. These conditions required Duke Energy to adjust its operations at its hydroelectric facilities (reduce flow and preserve water storage in the lakes) and monitor lake levels at boat ramps to ensure safety. The Advisory Group also urged the public to conserve water and to limit the amount of water used in landscaping. (source: news release on www.catawbawatereemg.org dated 11/2/23)

NEWS FROM THE TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS Burn Ban

On November 9, the Town of Granite Falls announced a burn ban in effect until further notice due to dry condition that allow fire to spread easily. The ban involved campfires, bonfires, and the burning of trash/leaves, etc. Residents could cook on outdoor charcoal, pellet, and gas grills provided the fire was contained. The ban became effective at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 8 per a news release from the N. C. Forest Service. The Caldwell County Fire Marshal had already issued a ban on November 7. (source: local and state news releases issued 11/9/23)

After a significant amount of rain fell on Tuesday, November 21, local and state authorities lifted the burn ban at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 22. However, the rainfall was not substantial enough to move the area out of drought conditions. (source: local and state news releases on 11/22/23)



Fire Department News

The Town of Granite Falls has received a \$5,000,000.00 allocation from the State of North Carolina to help build a new fire station at 16 Falls Avenue (site of Granite Falls Elementary School from 1922 - 1963). Although the move from 119 North Main Street is necessary due to the proposed widening of 321A, the new location will provide more room for growth and the storage of modern equipment along with a closer proximity to downtown and quicker access to Hwy 321. Town officials

credit N C State Representative Destin Hall and N C Senator Dean Proctor with securing the funding. The allocation will provide a significant portion of the \$10,000,000.00 that the new facilities are expected to cost. The town will seek grants and other resources to finish funding the project. No date has been set for construction.

The Granite Falls Fire Department moved to North Main Street in 1966 from 5 Falls Avenue where it had shared space with the Police Department and Town Offices in the Municipal Building, which was constructed in 1938 by the WPA.

Christmas Parade

The Granite Falls Christmas Parade will be start at noon on Saturday, December 2. Lineup will begin at 10 a. m. at First Baptist Church of Granite Falls (14 Crestview Street). Impact by Rotary Club of the Foothills is sponsoring the annual event. The theme will be "Christmas Around the World." Prizes will be awarded for Best Display of Theme based on the opinion of a panel of judges.

Registration and payment may be made online at rcfimpact.com. For more information contact IMPACT by phone (572-3272) or by email at impact.rotaryfoothills@gmail.com.

SPECIAL INVITATION Christmas at the Baird House

The Granite Falls History Committee invites the public, especially newcomers to the area, to attend a special reception at the Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum from 2 until 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 17, 2023. Committee members will serve refreshments and give guided tours. The Town of Granite Falls will celebrate its 125th Anniversary on May 1, 2024, and the event will give visitors an opportunity to learn about our rich heritage.

Located at 107 Falls Avenue, the museum is the former home of Andrew Baird, the town's first settler. It is the oldest residence in Granite Falls, and the second oldest in Caldwell County (after Fort Defiance). Mr. Baird applied for a land grant on December 11, 1792 to build an iron forge on Gunpowder Creek using power from the falls that gives our town its name. He subsequently built his home, his business, and a village complete with a school, post office, and supporting trades. For more information, call Linda Crowder at (828) 396-1066.

Dateline: Granite Falls, N. C. Catching Up with History

TAR HEELS, HORNETS, AND ERIC CHURCH: The Friday, September 22/Saturday, September 23, 2023 edition of *The Charlotte Observer* featured an article on the front page about Granite Falls native Eric Church. The writer, Theoden Janes, had conducted the interview after the country star contacted the paper to promote “The Outsiders Revival Tour” at Charlotte’s PNC Music Pavilion, an event which was sold-out on Saturday with a few seats left for Sunday (as of the time the article was written).

During the interview, Eric noted that he had a passion for basketball and even thought he might have been a coach if not for his musical career. Although he graduated from Appalachian State University, he has been a fan of UNC at Chapel Hills since he was a child. Eric defended canceling a performance in San Antonio on April 2, 2023 so he could attend the UNC-Duke Final Four Game with his sons and father. His father had instilled in him a love for Carolina, and Eric has been passing that love to his sons, Boone and Hawk. Eric subsequently gave a free concert in San Antonio to make it up to his fans.

The article also mentioned Eric’s investment in the Charlotte Hornets. Over the years, Eric had become friends with Michael Jordan and Fred Whitfield, the President of the Hornets. Eric had been fan of the Hornets since he was a child, and purchasing stock from Michael Jordan was especially meaningful to him.

A copy of the newspaper is on file at the Granite Falls History and Transportation Museum.

(FESTIVAL ON THE SQUARE continued from page 1)

Wind Ensemble Percussion Section of the South Caldwell High School Band, Sims Country Cloggers, Granite Falls Middle School Chorus, South Caldwell High School Choir, Dudley Shoal Elementary School Chorus, and Granite Falls Elementary School Chorus. Following the musical program, Mayor Caryl Burns greeted the crowd and introduced members of the Town Council. Then she and Santa Claus led the crowd in a countdown to light the Christmas tree and watch for snow to fall. Gene Crawley emceed, and Jerry Anderson coordinated the event. The festive evening was supported by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the N. C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

Two more photos on page 4



Sims Country Cloggers



South Caldwell High School Band
Wind Ensemble Percussion Section



Granite Falls Middle School
Chorus



South Caldwell High School
Choir

(VETERANS continued from page 1)

(Stephen Raby, Chris Anders, Jason Rosenberger, and Brad Haas) presented colors. Josiah Worsley sang "The Star-Spangled Banner." The South Caldwell High School Symphonic Band under the direction of Jon Stafford played "God Bless America," "Marches of the Armed Forces," and "America the Beautiful." The South Caldwell High School Women's Choir sang "Song for the Unsung Hero" and "Travelin' Soldier." At the conclusion of the service Aiden and Addison Branham placed a wreath in front of the podium to recognize those who were killed in service to their country, and Isaac Shell and Kevin Callahan played "Taps."



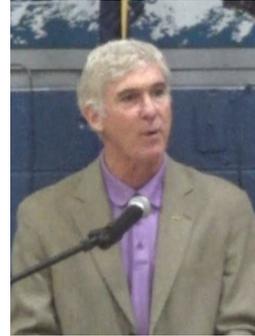
Rev. Michael Harris



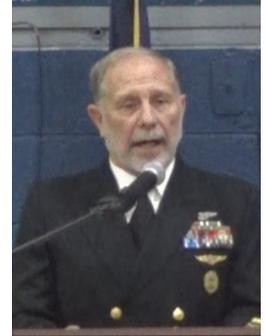
Mayor Caryl Burns



Phillip Hefner



Paul Kurts



Wayne Mihelich



Michael Tackett



SCHS Symphonic Band



SCHS Women's Choir



Granite Falls Elementary School Chorus
at Festival on the Square



Dudley Shoals Elementary School Chorus
at Festival on the Square



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.

Contact the Editor: Linda Richards Crowder by phone at (828) 396-1066, by text (828) 496-2835, or by email lrdrcrowder@gmail.com.

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 or the Facebook page under "Granite Falls (N. C.) History and Transportation Museum."