

## TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS NEWSLETTER - MAY 2011

### HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The Town Office, Recreation Center, Electric and Public Works Departments will be closed in observance for the following holidays:

**Memorial Day**-Monday, May 30, 2011.

**July 4**-Monday, July 4, 2011. (Pool will be open)

**Labor Day**-Monday, September 5, 2011.

**For all above holidays:** The Police and Fire Departments and the Water and Wastewater Plants will be on duty as scheduled. Garbage Disposal Service will pick up garbage/recycling on regular schedule.

#### TOWN HAS TWITTER ACCOUNT

The town has established a Twitter account of the town's website. Follow the updates and information at <http://twitter.com/GraniteFallsNC> (exactly as shown). There is also a link on the town's website.

[www.granitefallsnc.com](http://www.granitefallsnc.com)

ANNUAL REPORTS FOR THE TOWN DEPARTMENTS  
CAN BE VIEWED ON OUR WEBSITE

### SAVE THE DATES

#### NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER-MAY 5, 2011

On Thursday, May 5, 2011 at 12:00 noon, the National Day of Prayer will be held in the Town Square. Rain location will be the Family Life Center at the 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church.



Strictly Clean and Decent  
Kay Crouch, Patrick Crouch and Ron Shuffler

### **ART IN THE PARK – JUNE 14, 2011**

On Tuesday, June 14, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., the Town of Granite Falls and the Caldwell Arts Council will sponsor ART IN THE PARK in downtown Granite Falls. Performing at this year's event will be Strictly Clean and Decent, an acoustic trio which features Patrick Crouch, Ron Shuffler, and Kay Crouch. Their brilliant vocal harmonies top a solid instrumental foundation. They are dedicated to performing a variety of musical styles which includes: modern folk songs by American, Canadian, and Irish songwriters; traditional and contemporary blue grass music; Celtic airs and dance tunes; popular jazz, swing and western swing music and a few classic country tunes. This will be a program to be enjoyed by all. **ADMISSION IS FREE!** The Granite Falls Merchants Association will sell food and drinks. Come join the fun.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Granite Falls Merchants Festival Saturday, September 17, 2011**

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

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Contact the Police Department at  
**(828) 396-3358**  
during holidays or  
after hour emergencies.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Please feel free to contact your elected officials  
to discuss town government:

Barry Hayes, Mayor ..... 396-2225  
Dr. Caryl B. Burns, Mayor Pro Tem ..396-3713  
Don Kirkpatrick ..... 396-3956  
Frank Mackie ..... 396-5687  
Mike Mackie..... 396-3546  
Max McRary ..... 396-7100  
Tracy Townsend ..... 396-9055

**FRIENDLY REMINDERS FROM YOUR PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Please note that leaf pick-up concluded March 31, 2011. Approximately 200 tons of leaves were collected and recycled! If you still have leaves and small debris, please put them in plastic bags and they will be picked up on Thursdays. Bags can be obtained from the Town Administrative Office.

Please remember that grease is the leading cause of sewer line blockages. Even dishwashing can lead to grease blockages. Drains can periodically be cleaned with a combination of vinegar, baking soda and hot water.

Keep up the good work, everyone! Our recycling average leaped from 77% to 82%!

Limbs will be chipped on a regular scheduled basis. Weather and work load permitting, we try to cover the entire town every week. Special cases of extremely larger amounts of chipping are generally done last. If this is not agreeable, you may have to find outside sources such as your contracted tree cutter to remove the chipping. We try to offer a

wide range of services, but work forces are sometimes limited. Approximately 200 tons of limbs were chipped and recycled!

Please remember that electric meters and water meters must be able to be read monthly. Please trim back any bushes, hedges or limbs that are obstructing views. No cars should be parked over water meters and all gates should be unlocked during meter reading time. Meters are generally read during the 12<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of each month. **If you have dogs or a gate that cannot be unlocked, please call your reading in to the Town Administrative Office at 396-3131 no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.**

Please do not blow grass into the streets and gutters. When it rains, clippings are washed down the storm drains and eventually end up in our drinking water resource. Only water should go down storm drains. Bag your grass clippings in manageable amounts (50lbs or less) and they will be picked up on Thursdays. Bags may be obtained at the Town Administrative Office.

Please remember that household garbage intended for pickup cannot be placed out for collection any earlier than the night before scheduled pickup. Thank you for doing your part to help keep Granite Falls clean and safe.

### **REMINDER ABOUT CEMETERY RULES**

Mowing season is here and Town personnel have cleaned up the cemetery for safety reasons. As a reminder, the following Town ordinances govern the placement of items in the cemetery:

**Town Ordinance Section 91.26** states “The placing of vases, rocks, small stones, shells, toys, balloons, ornamental flags, singing cards, various solar lights and designs, metal designs, stone and rock monuments of homemade nature, ornaments, chairs, settees, glass, wood designs, iron cases, fences or walls, bordering and similar designs, and articles or planting of flowers or shrubs upon plots shall not be permitted for safety reasons and if so placed, the town reserves the right to remove the same. Flowers, ornaments of any nature or design, frames and baskets shall be removed from grave or plot at any time at the discretion of the Public Works Director. Vases are for flowers only.”

**Town Ordinance Section 91.27** states “Flowers in wire stands are allowed only in the winter months and will be removed when unsightly, broken or damaged or when necessary to cut grass in a safe manner. Vases are to be used only for flowers for safety reasons.”

### **ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT REMINDERS**

The Town of Granite Falls continues to offer rebates on purchases of residential heat pumps and electric water heaters to our electric customers. To qualify, the heat pump needs to have a seer rating of 14 and a minimum size of 1 ton up to 5 tons. The heat pump rebate will be \$400.00 per installed unit with no maximum number of units to a customer/builder/developer. The rebate for electric water heaters is still \$150.00. The water heater can be no smaller than 30 gallons.

Energy audits are offered to customers that want to lower their energy consumption. This will be a walk through inspection of your home looking for areas of improvement. For combustion safety issues, only “all electric” customers qualify. Please call Jim Cushing at 828-396-2989 with any questions.

Always inspect your air filters at least once a month. Dirty air filters will reduce efficiency of your air handler and increase power consumption.

Please remember that after 5:00 pm electrical emergencies shall be directed to The Town of Granite Falls Police Dept. They can be contacted at 396-3358. Please make sure that you give them your address and phone number, as a line technician may need to contact you.

Please report streetlight or security light problems to the Town Administrative Office at 828-396-3131.

Trees and power lines don't mix! These can cause your lights to blink and also blow fuses causing outages. Please report any unsafe conditions where tree limbs have grown up into power lines so we can address the situation. **Do not touch and stay clear of this type of situation!** Call the Town Administrative Office to report potential problems at 828-396-3131.

### **OVERHEAD POWER LINE SAFETY**

The Town of Granite Falls reminds you to be aware of power lines and stay away from them.

Power lines carry thousands of volts of electricity and are not insulated. Both direct and indirect contact can be instantly fatal.

- Never climb a utility pole in an attempt to remove an entangled object (tree limb, kite, model airplane, etc.) from a power line. Call the town office for safe removal.
- Never attempt to remove tree limbs that are growing near or into power lines. Instead, call the town office for assistance.

- When installing or removing an antenna, make sure its distance from any power line is 10 feet or twice its height whichever is greater. If the antenna starts to fall, let it go and stay clear.
- Fly kites in open areas away from power lines and busy streets, using non-metallic string. If the kite or any like object is moving toward a power line, let go of the string immediately.
- Plan carefully when planting vegetation near power lines. Avoid planting trees that will mature to a large size and eventually interfere with electrical conductors or equipment.
- When working with a ladder, make sure its distance from any power line is 10ft. or twice its length, whichever is greater.
- If you see a sagging or downed power line, assume it is energized and immediately call the town office. Do not attempt to remove the line or any object that may be in direct contact with it.
- Before installing a pool, contact the town office to help determine the safest location with regard to power lines. With existing pools, be aware of power lines whenever using long-handled pool cleaners or rescue poles.

The Town of Granite Falls Administrative Office phone number is 828-396-3131.

### **RECREATION INFORMATION**

The pool at the Granite Falls Recreation Center will be open for the regular swim season as follows:

**Pool Hours:** Open daily beginning Saturday, June 11th until school begins  
 Monday – Saturday 1:00 – 5:00, Sunday 2:00 – 5:00  
 Night Swim each Monday 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

**Daily Cost:** Youth \$3.00 and Adults \$4.00. Night Swim -Youth \$2.00 and Adults \$3.00

**Swim Lessons:** Registration for swim lessons begins April 25. First classes begin June 13  
 Morning sessions from 11:15 a.m. to 12:00 noon  
 Ages: 4 to 6 = 1 week class for \$15 resident and \$25 non-resident  
 Ages: 7 to 12 = 1 week class for \$15 resident and \$25 non-resident

**Pool Rental:** The pool is available for rent for family reunions, birthday parties, etc.  
 Call 396-1221 for cost and availability.

**Aerobics:** Classes Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. For more information call instructor Nancy Pittman at 324-4248.

**Soccer:** Registration begins July 18<sup>th</sup>. Residents -\$35.00 Non-residents -\$45.00  
The league will start in August.

## **GRANITE FALLS SWIM TEAM**



Be a Shark! Join the Granite Falls Swim Team. The team wants swimmers from ages 5 through 18. All skill levels needed. The Sharks have both morning and evening practices for swimmers' convenience. Registration will take place at the Granite Falls Recreation Center on May 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m. For more information, contact the Recreation Department at 828-396-1221 or visit the teams website at [www.gfst-sharks.com](http://www.gfst-sharks.com).

### **TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR RELIABLE ELECTRIC OPERATIONS**

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 21, 2011—The Town of Granite Falls Electric Department is one of 82 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities to earn Reliable Public Power Provider (RP<sub>3</sub><sup>®</sup>)<sup>1</sup> recognition from the American Public Power Association for providing consumers with the highest degree of reliable and safe electric service. Paul Allen, vice president, engineering at Nashville, Tenn., Electric Service and chair of APPA's RP<sub>3</sub> Review Panel, presented the designees on March 21st, during the association's annual Engineering & Operations Technical Conference, held in Nashville, Tenn.

“These RP<sub>3</sub> designated utilities should be proud,” said Allen, “They stand out as utilities that are continuing to strive for excellence for their customers and their communities.”

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The RP<sub>3</sub> program recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement. Criteria within each category are based on sound business practices and represent a utility-wide commitment to safe and reliable delivery of electricity.

“This is a real honor for our utility,” said Steve Stilwell, Electric Department Director of the Town of Granite Falls. “A lot of hard work has gone into receiving this designation and—in the end—our customers are the real winners.”

This is the 6th year that RP<sub>3</sub> recognition has been offered. APPA is the national organization representing more than 2,000 not-for-profit, community and state-owned electric utilities. It is located in Washington, D.C.

<sup>1</sup> RP<sub>3</sub><sup>®</sup> is a registered service mark of APPA.



### **Be Aware of Bicyclists and Pedestrians!**

With the increasing warm weather, we will see an increase in the number of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the Town of Granite Falls. We encourage everyone to increase your awareness while driving, riding or walking through town. While in your vehicle please be aware of bicyclists and pedestrians and “Share the Road.” Remember that pedestrians have the right of way in marked crosswalks. (Pedestrians, make sure you are using marked crosswalks.)

### **While on your bicycle please follow the following rules:**

North Carolina General Statute 20.171.7 requires the following:

**§ 20-171.7. Legislative findings and purpose.**

- (a) The General Assembly finds and declares that:
- (1) Disability and death of children resulting from injuries sustained in bicycling accidents are a serious threat to the public health, welfare, and safety of the people of this State and the prevention of that disability and death is a goal of all North Carolinians.
  - (2) Head injuries are the leading cause of disability and death from bicycling accidents.
  - (3) The risk of head injury from bicycling accidents is significantly reduced for bicyclists who wear proper protective bicycle helmets; yet helmets are worn by fewer than five percent (5%) of child bicyclists nationwide.
  - (4) The risk of head injury or of any other injury to a small child who is a passenger on a bicycle operated by another person would be significantly reduced if any child passenger sat in a separate restraining seat.

(b) The purpose of this Article is to reduce the incidence of disability and death resulting from injuries incurred in bicycling accidents by requiring that while riding on a bicycle on the public roads, public bicycle paths, and other public rights-of-way of this State, all bicycle operators and passengers under the age of 16 years wear approved protective bicycle helmets; that all bicycle passengers who weigh less than 40 pounds or are less than 40 inches in height be seated in separate restraining seats; and that no person who is unable to maintain an erect, seated position shall be a passenger in a bicycle restraining seat, and all other bicycle passengers shall be seated on saddle seats. (2001-268, s. 1.)

We also suggest that *all* bicyclists wear an approved protective helmet, not just those under 16.

**Town Ordinance Section 70.03** prohibits the riding of a bicycle upon any sidewalk with the town limits. The purpose of this is to prevent collisions between bicyclists and pedestrians.

By following these few simple guidelines we can all remain safe and enjoy our summer months outside.

### **AUTOMATIC DRAFT AVAILABLE**

The town now offers automatic drafts for utility payments. It's simple and easy with no more worrying about getting your payment in on time.

When you pay your next utility bill, bring a voided check to the town office and we will begin the automatic draft the next month. We have a form that you will need to sign. We process the draft on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, the last date before a late fee is imposed.

If you have any questions, please contact Ramona Bumgarner or Marsha Harbison at 828-396-3131.

### **ENERGY SAVING TIPS FOR HOT WEATHER**

Extreme temperatures lead to high electric usage, and higher-than-average electric bills. NC Public Power urges you to be conscious of your electric usage during this period of high demand. The biggest summer energy users are air conditioning, water heating and operating refrigerators and freezers. Below are some tips that can help you save energy and save money during the summer season:

- Keep your air conditioner set on 78 degrees or higher. One degree change will affect your cooling energy use from 3 percent to 5 percent.
- Set your thermostat up when you are away from home, at night and during peak times.
- Make sure your duct system is sealed, especially if it is in the attic. Attic temperatures can rise to 140 degrees and leaky ductwork can bring this heat into your house.
- Inspect your air filters monthly and change as needed.
- Use ceiling fans as much as possible. They help evaporate moisture from your skin, making you feel cooler.
- Run exhaust fans in the kitchen and bathroom when cooking and bathing/showering. These activities add heat and moisture to the house.
- Close blinds and drapes during the hottest part of the day to reflect sunlight and heat away from your home's interior.
- Change out incandescent lights to compact fluorescent lights (CFLs). They not only reduce electric use for lighting by 75 percent, they also reduce the heat produced from lighting by 75 percent.
- A full freezer costs less to run than an empty one. Fill empty two-liter plastic bottles with water and put in the freezer if you need to fill your freezer.
- If you have a second, older refrigerator or freezer located in a garage or any unconditioned space, consider consolidating food to the main refrigerator or freezer instead. Older appliances are much less efficient than newer models and can use up to two times more electricity than if located in a conditioned space.

For more energy-saving tips, visit the "Save Energy" section of [NCPublicPower.com](http://NCPublicPower.com) or contact your municipal electric provider for local savings programs and tips.

## **WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

Construction work began on the Water System Improvement Project on March 1, 2011. The project consists of the construction of a 1 million gallon water storage tank and new water lines from the tank site to existing water lines on Duke Street and Highway 321. Additionally, the water tank at Granite Falls Middle School will be removed and the water tank at the Granite Falls Recreation Center will be repainted. This project is the largest single capital project in the history of the Town of Granite Falls and was made possible through grants the Town received from US Department of Commerce-Economic Development Administration, NC Rural Economic Development Center, NC Department of Commerce-Industrial Development Fund, NC Golden Leaf Foundation, and US Department of Agricultural Rural Development-Appalachian Regional Commission. The project is scheduled to be completed by the end of May, 2012.

## **TOWN TO FLUSH WATER SYSTEM MAY 5<sup>TH</sup> & 6<sup>TH</sup>**

Town employees will be flushing the water system Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> & Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Periodic flushing of the water system helps ensure that the Town delivers the best possible water to your home and businesses. Should you experience temporary water discoloration, turn on your cold water and allow it to run until it clears. You may experience temporary low water pressure during the flushing of the water system.

## **NEW YIELD SIGNS INSTALLED BY NCDOT**

To comply with new railroad safety regulations, the NC Department of Transportation has installed new yield signs at the Duke Street and South Main Street intersection and the North Highland Avenue and North Main Street intersection at the middle school. These are reminders for motorists to be aware of and yield to oncoming trains.