

The Bethlehem Star

VOLUME XLV NUMBER 12

Serving the Bethlehem Community of Alexander County - Published by The Taylorsville Times

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2017



Homes throughout the Bethlehem Community were damaged during the October 23 EF2 Tornado.

Tornado confirmed in Alexander Co.

Meteorologists and storm surveyors have released a preliminary survey of the severe storm of Monday, October 23, 2017, which ravaged western Alexander County and other areas and resulted in tornado activity in the region.

According to the National Weather Service's Greenville/Spartanburg Office, an EF2 tornado touched down near the Hickory Regional Airport in extreme eastern Burke County, destroying a hangar and planes inside. Initially, the tornado was very narrow, with damage localized to the one hangar. The tornado downed some trees in Winkler Park, then continued northeast straddling the Caldwell/Catawba county line.

While weakening to EF1, the tornado

widened to almost 3/4 mile, with damage on either side of Lake Hickory in both counties. Significant tree damage occurred with hundreds of trees downed, many on houses, cars, and other structures. Additional tree damage occurred outside the tornado's path due to widespread intense straight-line winds. The tornado turned left, narrowed, and straddled the Alexander/Caldwell county line, again resulting in mainly tree damage but with some structural damage from falling trees.

The tornado shifted back northeast, finally weakening and lifting just south of the Alexander/Wilkes county line, west of Highway 16.

Winds in the tornado achieved an estimated maximum wind speed of 125 mph.

The tornado path length was 22.83 miles.

For reference, the Enhanced Fujita Scale classifies tornadoes into the following categories:

EF0: Wind speeds 65-85 mph.

EF1: Speeds 86-110 mph.

EF2: Speeds 111-135 mph.

EF3: Speeds 136-165 mph.

EF4: Speeds 166-200 mph.

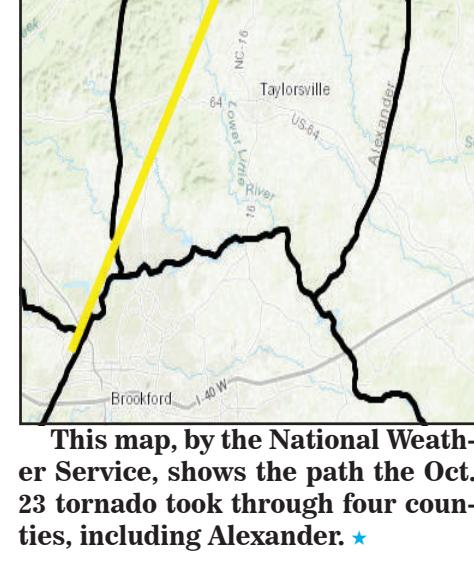
EF5: Speeds over 200 mph.

NWS staff noted the information in this statement is preliminary and subject to change pending final review of the event and publication in NWS *Storm Data*. More information and an interactive map that includes the other five tornadoes which hit western NC Oct. 23 are online at <http://www.weather.gov/gsp/newTornadoMap>.

EM OFFICE STILL COMPILED STORM DAMAGE REPORTS

Alexander County Emergency Management (EM) Director Russell Greene told The Times that some 170 structures

• See STORM Page 6

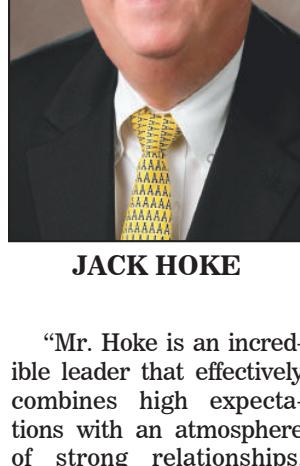


This map, by the National Weather Service, shows the path the Oct. 23 tornado took through four counties, including Alexander. *

Hoke will be school system's 2018 Award of Honor recipient

Former Superintendent Mr. Jack Hoke has been selected as the 2017 Award of Honor Recipient. The award recognizes individuals who have made exceptional contributions to Alexander County Schools in the areas of academics, athletics, administration, student achievement, or community service. Nominees are judged on the basis of their positive effect on the quality of education in Alexander County as recognized by fellow students, teachers, administrators, and the community in general.

Hoke served as the Alexander County School System Superintendent from January 1, 2001, until his retirement in February 2012. He also served as Associate Superintendent from July 1998 to December 31, 2000. Mr. Hoke's leadership influenced the culture of the school system and the community. As a career educator and advocate for public education, he worked tirelessly to support staff members and students in their efforts to excel, according to school personnel.



JACK HOKE

further positive changes to their education structures."

"My first opening session as superintendent in Alexander County gave me an opportunity to highlight some of my 'Champions.' Mr. Hoke was high on that list. I will be forever grateful for the support he provided me during my professional journey in this school system," said current Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Hefner.

"Over the years, I worked for some amazing people, and Mr. Hoke certainly was one of the best. His style was to hire great people, hold them to very high expectations, and get out of their way. Once he turned something over to you, you owned it, and it needed to be done efficiently and with the highest of quality," stated former Associate Superintendent Dr. Jeff Peal and current county commissioner. Peal served as an associate superintendent under Mr. Hoke's leadership.

Dr. Peal continued to say that Hoke made relationships a priority. "Mr. Hoke was a great leader as he always kept relationships as the most important thing. He was also, without a doubt, the most effective manager I ever worked for and was able to get the most out of those around him. Mr. Hoke was an excellent communicator, and there was never any doubt regarding what he said and what he expected. It was an honor and a privilege to work with him. Servant leaders such as Mr. Hoke are a rare find. Alexander County School system was blessed to have him all those years."

In a recommendation letter for the Award of Honor, Mr. Dale Robertson detailed how Mr. Hoke's

• See HOKE Page 6



Super Hugo visits BES Students - Page 7

Next Star prints December 14

The next issue of The Bethlehem Star will be printed on Thursday, December 14. The deadline for advertising and correspondence is Tuesday, December 12, before 5 pm.

• See HOKE Page 6

+

DINNER THEATRE PLANNED AT FELLOWSHIP CHURCH — The upcoming dinner theatre at Fellowship Advent Christian Church will be held Friday and Saturday evenings, Nov. 24 and 25, with a matinee on Sunday, Nov. 26. Pictured above, left to right: seated – Bill Millinor, Savannah Minyard, and Joel Teague; standing – Kevin Bedenbaugh, Deana Kirby, Jake Reid, Tim Spencer, Siera Jowers, Patty Spencer, Shirley Ross, Lynn Preslar, and Sharon Norris.*

Christmas Dinner Theater at Fellowship Church

Tickets have recently gone on sale for Crossroads Community Theater's annual Christmas production, which will be hosted at Fellowship Church on November 24, 25, & 26. This year's show is entitled "A Cricket County Cabin Makeover," and is a comedy production written by Eddie McPherson and produced by special arrangement with Christian Publishers.

Seating is limited for these presentations, so you are encouraged to call 495-8086 to make your reservations as soon as possible. On Friday and Saturday evenings at 6:30 p.m., a delicious evening meal and an entertaining Christmas comedy presentation are available for a cost of only \$12.00 per ticket (children under 12 at half price and under 4 free.) The Sunday 2:30 matinee will feature the show and a tasty dessert for only \$7.00 per ticket (half price under age 12, and under 4 free). Net proceeds from the event will benefit a number of area ministries, including seasonal assistance for needy families through the Bethlehem Benevolent Fund.*



Beth. churches plan special Thanksgiving service Nov. 22

The churches of Bethlehem will gather together at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 22, to celebrate their annual community Thanksgiving service, this year hosted by the Fellowship Advent Christian Church, 833 Icard Ridge Road. As usual, the service will feature inspirational music, praise, and testimonies to God's goodness. The featured speaker will be Rev. Billy Honeycutt of Promised Land Ministries. A special Thanksgiving offering will be received to benefit the Bethlehem Benevolent Fund, a fund administered cooperatively by the community's pastors which already this year has distributed over \$6,000 of assistance to the families and individuals of Bethlehem during times of acute need.

The public is cordially invited to share in this Christian celebration of Thanksgiving on November 22nd. Fellowship Church is located one mile south of West Alexander Middle School on Icard Ridge Road, just west of Highway 127. *