



VOL. 5, September 2025

NEWSLETTER

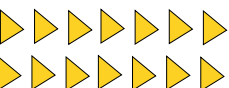


Hope in Action: Stories of Recovery, Resilience, and Renewal

This season, we're excited to share the incredible progress your support has made possible. From community playground installations, helping seniors in remote areas, to special deliveries, and helping families return home with dignity. You'll also meet some of the unsung heroes, volunteers, case managers, and partners who make this all possible every single day.

Thank you for being a part of the HopeMill family. We couldn't do this without you!

With Gratitude,
The HopeMill Team



STAY CONNECTED



<https://hopemill.org>



@hopemillorg



info@hopemill.org



<https://hopemill.org/hurricane-helene-donations/>

RECENT NEEDS MET

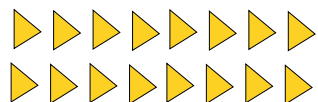
In September, we were able to meet several **unmet needs** within the senior community — many of whom were hesitant to ask for help, believing others needed it more. This mindset is common in our mountain communities, where **selflessness** and the spirit of **"help thy neighbor"** are deeply rooted in daily life.

We hired a local crew to **remove downed trees** from the storm out of an elderly woman's yard in Leicester.

After losing his home, we also assisted in **repairing** an older man's storm **damaged vehicle**, so he could make a cross-country trip to return home to his family.

We also are happy to be a part of rebuilding a family owned restaurant, Sheena's in Barnardsville, NC that has been in business for over 30 years.





HIGHLIGHT STORIES

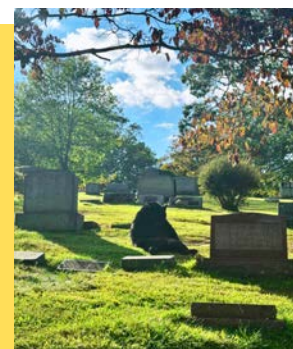
HONORING HISTORY AND HEROES

Amber recently participated in an amazing program hosted by the National Park Service (NPS-NCPTT) and the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. This event focused on post-disaster cemetery care. It was a hands-on workshop designed especially for: Historic Cemetery Managers, Institutions impacted by Hurricane Helene, and Preservationists. Participants learned skills like documenting damage, cleaning, and safely carrying out basic repairs on historic gravesites. They even met the local bear who hangs out in the cemetery. Amber is excited to bring this knowledge to our ongoing Whitson Cemetery Restoration Project! Which we are now in the repairing headstone phase. We have an upcoming workday with Blue Ridge Monuments of Marion, NC and Gaulden Monuments of Rock Hill, SC and need your help with the following. Currently, we're seeking funding to replace two headstones for Army veterans buried at Whitson Cemetery:

-One dual headstone for a PFC who served in World War I

-One single headstone for a PFC who served in Korea

If you're involved with an American Legion chapter, Veteran's organizations, or know someone who might be interested in supporting this effort, please reach out. Let's honor these veterans with the respect and care they deserve.



KEYS TO A FRESH START

Wanda and her daughter were displaced when their home was swept away by the **Catawba River** during Hurricane Helene. Their vehicle was damaged in the flood as well. Despite their losses, Wanda says they **consider themselves "the lucky ones" grateful to have safely evacuated with their two dogs.**

Over the past year, Wanda has worked tirelessly to secure a safe and permanent home. It's been a long, **stressful journey**, but every day **she keeps moving forward**, putting one foot in front of the other. One of her biggest challenges was **reliable transportation** to get to work. HopeMill was **happy to help** by **purchasing a vehicle** that will provide Wanda and her daughter with the freedom and stability they need to continue rebuilding their lives.

Wanda's strength is a powerful reminder that recovery isn't always about giant leaps, it's about steady, determined steps forward.



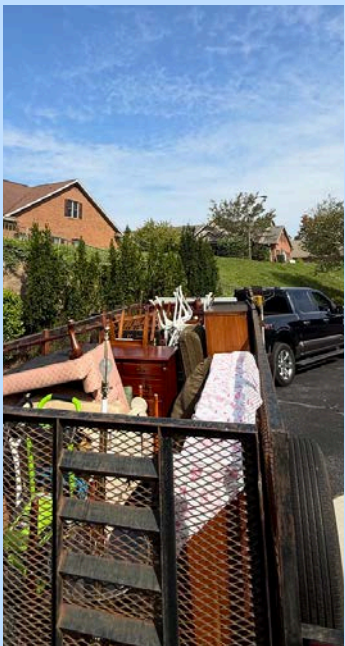
PLAYGROUND UPDATE: MAKING PROGRESS

Months ago, HopeMill purchased a **new playground** for **Mt. Calvary Freewill Baptist Church** — and we're thrilled to share that installation is **now underway!** With the help of our HopeMill team and **dedicated volunteers**, we made **great progress** on the setup. It was especially **meaningful to reconnect** with the Mt. Calvary community — some of the very first neighbors we supported after the storm, who were also out there **helping others, near and far.** We're deeply grateful for the ongoing friendship and can't wait to see the finished playground **bringing joy and laughter to local children!**



FROM ONE VETERAN TO ANOTHER

Recently, we had **the honor of helping a veteran** and his wife, **survivors** of Hurricane Helene who lost everything, **furnish their new home.** What made this moment even more meaningful was where the furniture came from: **the donated belongings of another veteran**, a man **remembered for his courage, generosity, and deep wisdom.** He may not have known that, after his passing, his belongings would bring comfort to a fellow veteran in need, but that's exactly what happened. **Thank you to Taylor** for donating her **grandfather's cherished items** and trusting HopeMill to place them in the right hands. **His legacy** now lives on through this **beautiful act of compassion and connection.**



HELP FOR MISS MABLE

At 92 years old, Miss Mable is still rebuilding after **losing her home** in the storm — **a true testament** to resilience and the power of community. **Her recovery** has been a **collaborative effort**.

HopeMill recently **provided two split units** to heat and cool her home, along with a bathroom vanity to help complete her space.

Thanks to Mountain Aid Project, we also delivered **tile for her kitchen and bathroom**.

Recovery across WNC is still ongoing, and for Miss Mable, it's been one step at a time — with support from **multiple organizations helping** bring her closer to the **finish line**.



SERVICE THAT INSPIRES, COMMUNITY THAT HEALS

We witnessed so many **incredible acts of service** throughout the mountains after the storm. We recently revisited some of those folks and delivered HopeMill **blessing baskets** to **local VFDs and community members** who helped so many during Hurricane Helene.

The baskets were thoughtfully prepared by **Granite Insurance** in Granite Falls, NC who generously **volunteered their time** to help us say **thank you**.

It's been wonderful to **reconnect, meet new faces, and reflect** on how far we've come— thanks to the partnerships that keep **WNC recovery moving forward**.



WHITSON CEMETERY PROGRESS

BEFORE



AFTER



GET INVOLVED: EVENTS & GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

- **September 27th**-Hurricane Helene One Year Anniversary
- **October 11th** - HopeMill & Town of Catawba BBQ Competition and Benefit Concert
- **November 1st**- Hope Wreaths for Hidden Cove Sale Ends
- **November 8th**- HopeMill's 2nd Annual Mountain Gala at Hillside Farms located in Lincolnton, NC
- WNC Thanksgiving Turkey and Christmas Toy Drives TBA



OTHER WAYS TO HELP

- **Monetary donations** keep our efforts moving forward and our mountain communities strong.
- **Volunteers** who are skilled in **restoration**, debris removal, residential construction.
- **Grant Writing** information and assistance
- Seeking **headstone replacements** for our cemetery project

If you would like to volunteer for events, rebuilding projects, or have time to assist with writing grants, please reach out to

info@hopemill.org



HopeMill Resilience Scholarship

Supporting students whose education has been disrupted by Hurricane Helene.

Eligibility: Applicants must reside in an affected WNC area, be enrolled in an accredited college or trade school, and demonstrate financial need due to storm-related hardships

Apply by visiting our website www.hopemill.org and select Resilience Scholarship.

Now Accepting Applications through December 1st, 2025

Thank you for standing with us. Your kindness is rebuilding lives, one step at a time.



A Year Later: Reflecting on September 27th, 2024

September 27th, 2024, changed the lives of so many in our community. The devastation left by Hurricane Helene was overwhelming, but what followed was nothing short of extraordinary.

People from all across North Carolina and beyond rose to the occasion. Over the past year, we've faced deep sadness, sorrow, and frustration. But above it all, we've witnessed something even stronger: **compassion, generosity, and love.**

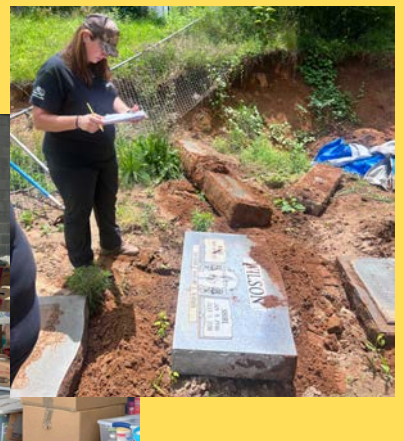
We've seen people show up, not for recognition or reward, but simply because it was the right thing to do. That kind of selfless action is what defines true community.

To everyone who has supported HopeMill this past year: thank you.

Thank you for standing with us!

Thank you for believing in the mission. And thank you for seeing this through.

We're not done yet and it's good to know we're not alone.



HOPEMILL'S 2ND ANNUAL

Mountain Gala

NOVEMBER 8TH
6-10 PM
SEMI-FORMAL

Hillside Farms
1229 Hill Rd,
Lincolnton, NC 28092

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT OF COMMUNITY, HOPE, AND IMPACT. OUR EVENT WILL FEATURE AN **APPALACHIAN** CUISINE-INSPIRED MEAL THAT CELEBRATES THE RICH CULINARY TRADITIONS OF THE REGION. ENJOY LIVE ENTERTAINMENT FROM A **WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA** BLUEGRASS BAND, BRINGING AUTHENTIC MOUNTAIN SOUNDS TO THE STAGE.

GUESTS WILL ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN A **SILENT AUCTION** FEATURING A CURATED SELECTION OF UNIQUE ITEMS AND EXPERIENCES FROM WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, WITH EVERY DOLLAR RAISED GOING DIRECTLY TO FAMILIES IN NEED. THERE WILL BE **RAFFLES** THROUGHOUT THE EVENING, SO BE SURE TO BRING CASH!

TO PURCHASE AN INDIVIDUAL TICKET OR BECOME A SPONSOR,
PLEASE GO TO [HTTPS://HOPEMILL.ORG/2ND-ANNUAL-MOUNTAIN-GALA/#SPONSOR](https://hopemill.org/2nd-annual-mountain-gala/#SPONSOR)

OR SCAN QR CODE





Hope Wreaths for Hidden Cove



HopeMill is partnering with Hidden Cove Tree Farm in Marion, NC to support recovery from Hurricane Helene. Each handmade wreath is crafted from their own fresh greenery, and every purchase will help their family farm.



Order Deadline: November 1st, 2025

Pick-Up: Rural King Parking Lot in Conover

**Pick-Up Dates: Saturday, November 22nd 9am-10am &
Sunday, November 23rd 2pm-3pm**

Any orders not picked up by Sunday Nov.23 will be donated.

Limited Supplies - We have a total of 50 wreaths available, so be the first to order!

To purchase visit or scan QR code below:



<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/hopemill-giving-hope-wreaths-with-hidden-cove>



8" WREATH

\$15

10" WREATH

\$20

12" WREATH

\$25

14" WREATH

\$30

16" WREATH (FITS STD DOOR)

\$35

20" WREATH (FITS STD DOOR)

\$40

24" WREATH

\$45

36" WREATH

\$60

54" WREATH

\$95

LEFT CANDY CANE WREATH

\$30

RIGHT CANDY CANE WREATH

\$30

SMALL CROSS WREATH

\$30

LARGE CROSS WREATH

\$40

SNOWMAN WREATH

\$50

BOWS

\$5