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Give Cheese A Chance rescheduled

Tickets still available for Halloween party

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Give Cheese a Chance, an annual fundraiser for Meeting Place Mission, has been rescheduled to Nov. 17 after the event was postponed after the remnants of Hurricane Helene hit Burke County.

The event brings teams together to compete to make grilled cheese sandwiches, which are judged by event attendees.

The date change is aimed to avoid financial burdens on competitors and allow for city cleanup from Hurricane Helene, said Suzy Fitzgerald, board member of Meeting Place Mission. The fundraiser, which will take place on the Historic Burke County Courthouse square, was originally scheduled for Oct. 6, about a week after the storm impacted the area.

“We really just felt like Oct. 6 was just way too soon to try to do that (the event),” Fitzgerald said.

Meeting Place Mission works to end homelessness in Burke



NEWS HERALD FILE PHOTO

The annual Give Cheese A Chance fundraiser for Meeting Place Mission is set for Sunday, Nov. 17, at the Old Burke County Courthouse in Morganton.

County and it operates two emergency homeless shelters, one for men and one for women and children.

Fitzgerald said the nonprofit contacted all of the competitors for the event to check what date would be best to reschedule.

“So we really tried to work with them,” Fitzgerald said. “Because,

I mean, they put all the work and the labor into it. It's their cheesy goodness that makes the whole event worthwhile.”

Fitzgerald said all of the tickets that have already been sold will still be valid and there are still tickets available for \$25. There are also spaces available for competitors.

This year, a ticket will allow attendees to try every single grilled cheese sandwich and get three judging tickets to pick three favorites. The winning top three competitors will receive a trophy and a gift certificate from Fonta Flora Brewery, Fitzgerald said.

For the first time, family tickets are available online at www.meetingplacemission.org or on the Meeting Place Mission Facebook page. A family ticket is for two adults and two children, Fitzgerald said.

Paper tickets for the event can be purchased from board members or Toner's Irish Pub.

Tickets are \$30 and can be purchased on the nonprofit's website. Some VIP tickets are still available, she said.

“A ticket gets you a really good time,” Fitzgerald said. “Some people dress up and some people don't, but everybody has a really good time. It's a lot of fun.”

Fitzgerald said the fundraisers come at an important time because she believes there will be more pressure on organizations like the Meeting Place Mission due to the damage left by Hurricane Helene.

“You know, and they're going to be displaced for a little while,” Fitzgerald said. “I don't think we have too many quick fixes for people who lost housing and things like that.”

Fitzgerald suspects the number of people the organization serves will increase.

“We serve people who are either at imminent risk of homelessness or who are homeless,” Fitzgerald said. “The reasoning behind why people are homeless doesn't determine whether or not we help them.”

FEMA opens centers in McDowell, Caldwell

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency has opened disaster recovery centers in Caldwell and McDowell counties.

The recovery centers can assist those affected by Hurricane Helene with applying for assistance and finding out what kind of assistance is available.

Residents from disaster areas can meet face to face with FEMA representatives at the sites. Residents can learn about financial assistance that may include money for basic home repairs, personal property losses, childcare, transportation and other needs.

In addition to the 28 areas in the state already eligible for disaster assistance, FEMA announced Wednesday that residents of Iredell County and 11 other North Carolina counties were eligible for assistance with uninsured damages.

The center in Caldwell County is located at 2345 Morganton Blvd., Lenoir, at the Caldwell County Health and Human Services Center.

The center in McDowell County is located at the McDowell County Senior Center, 100 Spaulding Road in Marion.

Both disaster centers are open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

For more information about FEMA disaster assistance, visit disasterassistance.gov.

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Star relit at Wake Forest as symbol of hope

JOHN HINTON
Winston-Salem Journal

The Moravian Star at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center was relit early Tuesday night as a symbol of hope for the survivors of the recent flooding in western North Carolina.

Dr. Keith Stirewalt, a chaplain and physician assistant at the medical center, called for a moment of silence.

“This evening, we light our magnificent Moravian Star as a symbol — as a reminder of the healing so desperately needed in our state and in our world,” Stirewalt said afterward.

The star with its shining light “reinforces the knowledge through us that light can overcome even the darkest of times,” Stirewalt said. “Let this light of hope shine, warming all in its radiance.”

Steady rain fell on the handful of people who attended the star-lighting event. The rain forced organizers to cancel a candlelight vigil for the flood survivors.

Since 1992, Wake Forest Baptist has celebrated the lighting of the 31-foot Moravian Star atop the medical center to encourage the holiday spirit within Winston-Salem, the organization said.

The star will be lit again in early December to observe Advent, which marks the beginning of the Christmas season.

The star weighs more than 3,000 pounds and has 27 points that range 7 feet to 11 feet in length and weighs from 30 pounds to 60 pounds each, the medical center said in a statement.

Each of the 27 points is illuminated by a 100-watt bulb.

This is the second time in recent years



ALLISON LEE ISLEY, WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL

The illuminated Moravian star is seen through raindrops on a car window at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center on Tuesday. The star was lit early this year to show unity and support for those impacted by Hurricane Helene in the western region of the state.

that the medical center officials lit the star in the months before December.

The star was lit in March 2020 to uplift local residents amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

At Tuesday's night ceremony, Cathleen Wheatley, the president of Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, said that lighting the star in mid-October is a special moment.

“We are lighting the Moravian star early — to share a sign of hope, strength and solidarity with our western neighbors, and to show our ongoing support for all impacted by Hurricane Helene,” Wheatley said.

Stars hold different meanings for many people, Wheatley said.

“But at the core, they are symbols that give us hope and lead us forward with light,” Wheatley said. “They unite us together. Now more than ever, this spirit of unity is needed.”

The medical center has accepted more than 135 patients from western North Carolina at its local hospital and clinics, and its AirCare and ambulance teams have transported more than 640 patients to hospitals across the region, Wheatley said.

Earlier Tuesday, Baptist employees donated household items and clothes to the United Way, which will deliver the items to people in western North Carolina, Wheatley said.

THE NEWS HERALD

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